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# **Near East/South Asia Report**

**AFGHANISTAN:**

**ISLAM AND POLITICAL MODERNITY**

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## NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

### AFGHANISTAN: ISLAM AND POLITICAL MODERNITY

Paris L'AFGHANISTAN-ISLAM MODERNITE POLITIQUE in French May 1985, pp 7-316

[Book by Olivier Roy: "Afghanistan: Islam and Political Modernity,"  
Editions by Seuil]

[Text] Foreward

This book is about the Afghan resistance. Another work will deal with Soviet policy. Most of our sources on the resistance (except for the bibliography at the end of the volume) come from five trips made from 1980 to 1984. We made extensive use of information brought back by Jean-Jose Puig and others from similar trips. We also owe a great deal to two information centers in Europe: Ceredaf in Paris, founded by the Afrane Association, and the Bibliotheca Afghanica in Liestal (Switzerland).

Transcription is based on Persian as spoken in Afghanistan (j = dj; u = ou; ch = tch; kh = Spanish j; zh = j), even for words of Arabic origin. The hesitation between short vowels (i or é, a or é) stems from the fact that the latter correspond to the spoken language and the former to classical pronunciation). We use the words as they have come into French when well-known ("Massoud"), whence a certain arbitrariness.

An appendix contains a bibliography of works consulted for completion of this work. Books are classified by author and date of publication. Notes from the text referring to a work are deliberately succinct. One will refer to the end of the volume for complete references.

#### Introduction

Why would anyone be interested in the history of the Afghan resistance? Does it already belong to the past of which one can write the history in the form of an obituary? This defeatist resignation presumes, in many observers, a certain philosophy of history: the idea that the spread of the Soviet system is inevitable and that one will see, after the passage of the ideological steam roller over an old land of Islam, something fundamentally new, throwing the past into the trash cans of history. A posthumous victory of Marxism among the very persons who take exception to it while accepting its inevitability. And yet, if one agrees on the impossibility of a military victory

over the resistance, one knows that guerrilla wars are political wars whose perverse long-term effects on colonial power are decisive, even if it is obvious that the Soviet system differs from our own. Whatever the outcome of this war, the Soviet system is evolving just like the contemporary Muslim world. The Afghan resistance is then found at the crossroads of these two histories. Far from being a mere spontaneous uprising, it is historically anchored in the Muslim people's revolts and in the reformist current of Islam, from Shah Waliullah to the modern Islamists. This history, still unpublished, enables one to understand a little better the link between Islamism and the people's movements. Finally, whatever the military fate of the resistance, the lines of strength that constitute it will reemerge in the Afghanistan of the future, whether free or Sovietized.

The lack of interest in Afghanistan also stems from the changing view which the West has of resistance movements.

If the different liberation movements in the past found an echo in the West, it is because they seemed to contain something universal; the world proletariat or liberation of the Third World. But Western intellectuals have gone from militant support -- for protagonists who for them embodied the direction of history -- to an ethical protest in the name of eternal values (human rights), thus finessing history or quite simply, the concrete reality of the drama denounced: Abstract, antitotalitarian discourse has but to be constantly nourished by an example (Sakharov is the archetype), whose ultimate end is of little importance. This shift has led from support for the Palestinian people, the latest embodiment of the universal factor in movement, to the rescue of the boat people, whose immobility as victims freezes them in time. But the Afghan resistance is first of all a historical phenomenon. A victimized people, a martyred people, yes, but also a fighting people, a people with a long history and contributing its word on its struggle.

How can one understand why many view the Afghan resistance as archaic and too particularistic? The mullah and the warrior are the two figures highlighted by the media when they report on the war. Tribalism is seen as folklore and therefore, infrapolitical, and fundamentalism as fanaticism, therefore archaic. These are two spontaneous associations that this book intends to challenge because the stakes are not only the Afghan resistance, but the question of politics in Muslim countries. The return of tribalism, of the *acabiyya* [esprit de corps] at the heart of modern states such as Syria and Lebanon,<sup>1</sup> the spread of Muslim revivalism in all its forms, from the Iranian revolution to preaching in the mosques of the Golden Drop. The emergence of nation states founded on secular ideologies has imposed itself as the only access to modernity, relegating tribalism to the realm of folklore and religion to the purely private sphere. But the movements of recent years show that things are much more complicated: The Iranian revolution is also expressed in a government policy of regional expansion through war and the backing (poorly accepted) of the Shiite minorities, both in Lebanon and Afghanistan. Furthermore, in the so-called modern states -- modern because secular -- regional, religious or ethnic traits have developed into networks of patronage apt to be articulated around government structures and give them a good thrashing, challenging the emergence of the universalist nation state. Only the



struggles of the Palestinians and the Kurds (in the case of the latter, so undermined by patronage, of which the whole confusion of tiny splinter groups is but one expression) present an aspect of struggle for a national identity. Even within the "progressive" movements, one finds the old *acabiyya*: declining aristocracies for the Iranian Tudeh (dominated by the Qadjar princes) or for the Baluchi *sardar* [supreme leader of a major Baluchi tribe] of the National Liberation Front; tribal rivalries at work in the Khalq and the Afghan Parcham; identification of a community with a party (Turkish *alevi* and the Social Democratic Party, the Druze of Lebanon and the Jumblatt Socialist Party, another "red prince").

A rapid glimpse at the scene in the Middle East (to confine ourselves to the Muslim world) shows that the criteria of modernity are not so obvious and lead one to challenge many accepted ideas. Of course, it is not a matter of upsetting the whole framework in order to find modernity in what one had called archaism, but of reflecting on these concepts of a "return to religion," "fundamentalism," "the shift to the political" and "civil society." Afghanistan, which has not experienced the loss of structures brought about by colonialism, is an excellent field for the analysis of these concepts. But before proceeding with the field study, we must define the terms we shall be using.

Obscurantism, Middle Ages, fascism, clericalism: The worst stupidities have been written about the return of religion to the Muslim world and one has here an old fantasy of the West about Islam. Actually, the phenomena grouped under the label of "fundamentalism" are very heterogeneous and are derived from different categories, only one of which (Islamism) is truly new. One must understand Muslim revivalism, not in reference to our recent history, which makes the modern state emerge from the secularization of society, but to the historical and social context of the Muslim world.

We shall label as "traditionalism" the determination to freeze society in the form of the memory one has of it: society of which our grandfathers spoke. Here, religion and customs are mingled. The historicity of any society is erased for the benefit of an imaginary timelessness that would be suddenly attacked from the outside by a pernicious modernity. Traditionalism makes no political plans. It lives in nostalgia and is politically inclined toward anything conservative. It fits in quite well with economic development if it is profitable and its nostalgia for the past is more moralizing than moved by a desire for social justice. The stakes will finally concern mores: the veiling of women, education of girls, filial piety, respect for established order. It is the discourse of the country squire, and in Afghanistan, of the *khan* [landowner with large following], that remains foreign to the city.

Fundamentalism is something completely different. It is the idea that there must be a return to the original writings, going beyond tradition, which has burdened and changed them. It is a "return to": rereading, the quest for one's roots. The enemy is not modernity, but tradition, or rather, in the Muslim context, anything that is not the tradition of the Prophet (*sunna*). It is a reformism. Fundamentalism is not inherently a political position because the "return" may take highly diverse forms. A return to strict religious practice, first of all, as observed in many emigre milieus. A return to

the practice of the text (study of the Koran and the *hadith* [words or attitudes of the Prophet]). It is the fundamentalism of the *madrassa* [higher religious school]. It is a return to religious law, to practice of the *shariat* [Islamic code]. It is the fundamentalism of the *ulema* [Muslim scholars]. The return to the text comes about precisely through the restoration of a new tradition and a body of exegetes who conceal as much as they unveil the text. The return therefore does not have the same meaning for an *alim* [doctor of law], who interprets based on scholastic tradition of the commentary, and for the young intellectual seeking a political model in the society of the time of the Prophet. Not only does the very definition of fundamentalism vary (a return, definitely, but return to what?), but the political connotations of fundamentalism are very different based on the cultural context. In a country like Afghanistan, where the very rhythm of daily life is patterned after the practice of Islam and where common law in nontribal zones is permeated by the sharia, fundamentalism makes no break with traditionalism. In contrast, when fundamentalism appears in urban milieus or in countries whose structures have been largely destroyed by modernization, such as Iran, then it immediately takes on a connotation of protest and comes closer to Islamism. I have compared fundamentalism with the Protestantism of the 16th century<sup>2</sup>: the same complexity in the way in which the reform fits into the social movements of the time, for one observes it serving as a vector for the German aristocracy as well as for the age-old peasant revolts or the bourgeois republics that would invent modern democracy. It is a matter of avoiding a mechanical linkage of religious attitude and political choice. Within the very corps of ulemas, one finds reticence about fundamentalism. All that one can say is that in Afghanistan, fundamentalism, defined as a desire to return to the sharia, is the spontaneous attitude of the cultivated clergy, the *ulema*. (Let us note that the village mullahs, without the same mastery of writings, are traditionalists and not fundamentalists.)

One then has the question of clericalism: Can one not see in fundamentalism a desire for power of the clerics, the educated, meaning those who have studied the texts and control their interpretation? This leads to the paradox that the beneficiaries of the return to the text would be precisely those whom the texts had not foreseen: There is no institution of the clergy in the Koran, no rock on which to found the church! The clerical institution is a product of the Middle Ages. The *fiqh* [Muslim law], concrete application of the sharia to society, springs from an age-old work of commentary and rereading. The text itself is lost, for one knows that the *fiqh* is generally taught only on the basis of abridged commentaries on commentaries.

And yet, we must make three remarks. On the one hand, there is no constituted clergy in Sunnite Islam. The clergy is not a social corps defined by a set of precise interests. It is not an accident if it is Shiite Iran that has put the clergy in power. Nowhere in the Sunnite world have the ulemas taken power, even in Wahhabi Arabia. The position of the ulemas with respect to politics is more secular than it would appear because they accept the existence of a legitimate *de facto* power, which the Shiite clergy rejects. Whence the possibility of an official Islam in the USSR and in Kabul. And yet, if fundamentalism is defined by a return to the text, it poses the problem of the corpus and exegesis. There is a great deal of difference between Qadhdhafi, for whom the only text is the Koran, and a classical *alim* for whom the

fundamental texts (the Koran and the Hadith) could not exist without commentary and a corps of exegetes (the ulema). This is why the fundamentalism of the alim is essentially a legal and not a political fundamentalism.

This leads us to the second point: The fundamentalism of the ulema defines a society of law, meaning that the social space is regulated by objective norms that are just as independent of the arbitrariness of the Prince as Western positive law can be (no more, no less). Criticisms that one addresses in the West at the sharia (uncivilized, archaic, and so on) could not conceal the fact that the shariat is definitely a system of law. There is a set of standards, generally written down, and interpreted by a corps of jurists. There is no Islamic totalitarianism, of subordination of civil society to the political, especially since in Islam, there is a self-reproduction of law and its interpreters without any state intervention. By definition, return to the sharia is neither fascistic nor totalitarian (which does not imply that it is democratic). Naturally, the sharia does not define a state of law, whatever the ulema and especially the Islamists say, and it is in this space that, beyond civil society, Islamist political thought will be deployed, leaving the legal administration of civil society to the ulema. Application of the sharia to civil society offers a guarantee against too strong an intervention of the sovereign, even if it has never prevented the arbitrary nature of power, but arbitrariness is not totalitarianism. Western criticism of the sharia brings both cultural values and differences into play. We shall not take up this debate (often sterile and hypocritical on both sides), but we do observe that it is based on a consensus in recognizing that a society of law defines a legality, a private sphere and a limit on arbitrariness. Furthermore, and particularly in rural areas, the legal space opened up by the sharia is perceived as protection against economic injustice. Even when it poorly performs the task (for example, because of corruption), it enables the farmer to denounce injustice and possibly, in case of revolt, to find in Islam the outline of a political organization compatible with its cultural universe.

Certain commentators see in fundamentalism the negation of the tradition of spirituality characteristic of Islam, as if the letter killed the spirit.<sup>3</sup> Here, the reflection is hidden by the fact that the French Islamist tradition is centered on the Maghreb, where the great figures of nationalist fundamentalism, like Abd el-Krim and Ben Badis, were very opposed to maraboutism, accused of heterodoxy and collaboration. But while one does find forms of maraboutism in Afghan tribal zones, the Sufiism dominant in Afghanistan is fundamentalist in tradition, following the lead of the Indian subcontinent. It is a point that will retain our attention. Likewise, the great movements of struggle against the invaders have nearly always come about through the connection of a tribal uprising and charismatic figures from the Sufi milieu. In Afghanistan, unlike the Maghreb, Sufiism, fundamentalism, millenarianism and the anticolonial struggle are linked. One can see that fundamentalism offers a whole range of attitudes, from the proximity of tradition to political dissent.

And yet, a new phenomenon appears in the 1930's, both in Egypt and on the Indian subcontinent: the movement of the Muslim Brotherhoods.<sup>4</sup> Forty years later, it becomes clear to many scholars studying religious movements in the



Muslim world that one can no longer see in that political Islam a mere avatar of fundamentalism, much less traditionalism, whence the appearance of the term "Islamist."<sup>5</sup> How is it to be interpreted and what is new about it? First of all, the origin of the members: Far from springing from the clerical or traditionalist milieu, they come from the modernist enclaves of society (teacher training schools, schools of sciences, urban milieus). Second, the political connection: Islamists refer more to the Islamist "ideology" than to religion in the strict sense. Their problem is to derive from Islam a political model able to compete with the great ideologies of the West. They explicitly pose the problem of the state ("Islamist republic"). One finds in them theory of the party, sense of history and political militancy. Instead of trying, like the ulema, to administer civil society, they claim to rebuild society based on the state. Relations between Islamists and the ulema are therefore marked with a mutual distrust. Islamism is not a clericalism, for the very simple reason that it emerges outside of the clergy, except in Iran.

In a sense, the fundamentalism of the Islamists is more radical than that of the ulema. What they envisage is not a return to the shariat, perceived as a means and not an end, but reconstruction of political relations based on the model of the first Muslim community. Legalism gives way to utopia, millenarianism and revolution. What the return to the roots enables one to get around is not only additions to tradition, but the very body of the managers of tradition, meaning the clergy. If the reconstruction of society is based on a mythical model, it totally yields to this new "cleric": the intellectual. For the difference between the intellectual and the educated person is that the frame of reference of the former is in the final instance the state. Whether he is a dissenter or not, his interlocutor is the state because his training ground (the school), his position vis-a-vis the political ("there is the political aspect"), as well as his place in society (usually a low-level civil servant) presume that there is a state. The alim is more indifferent to the state because he refers to a corpus and a corps that reproduce themselves: His reference is the Muslim *umma* [community]. In the Muslim world, civil society is a society of law and it is the state that may finally appear to be particularist and "fanatical" (fanaticism of strength and the negation of the private sphere, fanaticism of the *acabiyya* that can remain in power only by fighting against everyone). The particularism of the state explains to what extent it can be personalized. The theme of the "good sovereign" or the good guide is of prime importance in the Muslim political universe. While there can be tyranny here, there is no room for totalitarianism and the Islamists will notice it by being confronted with the cohesion of the *acabiyya* and civil society managed like a society of law by the ulema. At least, this is the Afghan scenario, in which there is a structure of the solidarity groups (the *qawm*) and a society of law. The systems that witness the emergence of dictatorial states are those in which the state is confronted only with the *acabiyya* (Syria, Libya). Another atypical example of a dictatorship is Iran, the only country where the clergy has totally taken over the Islamist claim. It is the specificity of the Shiite clergy, politicized, hierarchical and dissident, that explains this intervention in the political realm. In the case of Iran, the distinction between Islamists and traditionalists moves into the clergy itself and the faction now in power places emphasis on the political ideology before application of the sharia. Current Iranian politics, like



the new legislation, has nothing to do with the desire to see the sharia constitute the basis of Iranian law. Iranian legislation takes from the sharia only the symbolic manifestations and remains secular, just as power is more in the hands of the Guardians of the Revolution, who are not clerics, than of the clergy. Iran appears to be an exception and not the prototype of an "Islamist republic."

Since the Islamists have no control over civil society, the key to their future is their liaison with the corps of ulema, their only means of penetrating civil society other than through the politicization of daily demands, whose ephemeral nature has been shown by the practice of local Communist parties. Afghanistan provides us with a rare and interesting case of collaboration between ulema and Islamists, probably because the Afghan Islamists are not cut off from traditional society. Let us state that one does not find among Afghan Islamists the hatred of the West or the anti-Semitism so strong among their Egyptian counterparts the consequence of the absence of colonization as well as the profound distrust of the Afghan resistance to the PLO, perceived as pro-Soviet.

Value judgments on Islamism need to be reconsidered. We emphasize the modernity of Islamism. This does not mean that we are supporters of Islamism or that we believe that Islamism provides responses to the crisis in contemporary Muslim societies. We simply want to emphasize that the problems of Islamism and its birthplace are resolutely contemporary. Finally, we will be permitted to keep a certain distance with respect to accusations of archaism concerning mores. If one takes the most controversial question, women, there is, on the one hand, a cultural context that goes far beyond Islamism and even Islam and, on the other hand, an exacerbated Puritanism typical of many revolutions. Regular knowledge of a Muslim country means that not only does one feel that the problem -- which is real -- is poorly posed, but also that the very virulent controversy in the West on the fate of Muslim women masks a conflict that is much more vast. Whatever the case, one must distinguish the position of the Muslim woman in traditional society, which one cannot impute to Islamism, and the way in which Islamists try to "re-Islamize" the urban woman, who is educated and more emancipated, often through militant women.<sup>6</sup>

For us, the question of the shift to the political is the key to contemporary phenomena. But the prospect of this shift is obviously not purely religious or even ideological. Afghanistan enables us to define this problem of the shift to the political, relative to problems raised by tribalism, the state and reference to the universal. In Muslim countries, loyalties are divided between the close solidarity group (acabiyya, qawm in Afghanistan) and the umma, the Muslim community (of which the "Arab nation" and the Ba'thist ideology is but a variation), except in the few states with their own state tradition (Egypt, Iran, Morocco). Modern states have been built in the same tension, whence the alternance of ephemeral interstate unions (for which Libya holds the record) and the capture of the government apparatus by a solidarity group, whether religious (Alid, Maronite) or tribal (royal dynasty or the "country" of the same village, like the people of Tikrit in Iraq). From the establishment of the Afghan state based on a tribal confederation (1747 [sic]-1978) to the communist coup of 1978 and the resistance, Afghanistan is part of this problem. Each of these ups and downs is in the name of a universalist ideology (nationalism, Marxism, fundamentalism mingled with Islamism), but

the political forms they take see the continued existence of the solidarity groups. One can already say that a stable and autonomous Marxist regime will not emerge. If the resistance is beaten, Afghanistan will be a Soviet province without having such legal status. If, on the contrary, the resistance holds, its future will be played in the complex dialectic between the traditional segmentation of society and the emergence of state forms (political party, an emerging army and a unified administration).

It is interesting to compare the Afghan resistance and the Rif war (1921-1926), which are very similar if one excepts the question of the Sufi brotherhoods. One may well wonder whether the Rif war was the "last colonial campaign or (the) first revolutionary war."<sup>7</sup> Likewise, one may wonder if the Afghan resistance is the last war of the *basmachi*, those traditionalist rebels who waged a rear guard fight against the Sovietization of Central Asia between 1920 and 1939, or the first stage of an awakening of Islam in the lands of the Empire, who would invent forms of organization that would be both modern and rooted in tradition: the modernity of the political plan of a state built based upon a party and an ideology and the tradition of daily Islam. The Afghan resistance soldiers are no longer *basmachi*, just as the Soviets are no longer Bolsheviks. The war in Afghanistan does mark a phase in the history of Central Asia. One can shed light upon it by the past, but one has also to grasp the new elements, even if, as for Abd el-Krim, the traces of traditional society prevail.

This is the reality that we shall try to study, placing more emphasis on structures than on events. In a country where every journey is on foot, where dates are confused and homonyms abound and where dust is not a metaphor, we often lack the most basic traces. But intelligibility does emerge and not only in order to exhume the origins of the Afghan resistance, but in order to situate a dynamic that goes beyond the borders of Afghanistan.

Dreux, 20 October 1984

#### NOTES

1. See the issue of ESPRIT, LE PROCHE-ORIENT DANS LA GUERRE (May-June 1983); G. Michaud, "State Terrorism, Terrorism Against the State," in ESPRIT, issue "Terrorismes," October-November 1984; M. Seurat, "The People, the State, Society," in LA SYRIE D'AUJOURD'HUI, CNRS, 1980.
2. For a critical discussion, see M. Barry, "Le Royaume de l'Insolence," 1984, p 80 and the following and p 276 and the following.
3. See Shayegan, "Qu'est-ce qu'une Revolution Religieuse?" 1982.
4. Mitchell, "The Society of the Muslim Brotherhood," 1969; Mortimer, "Faith and Power," 1982; Carre et Michaud, "Les Freres Musulmans," 1983; Kepel, "Le Prophete et le Pharaon," 1984.
5. I have borrowed the term from J.-F. Clement ("For a Comprehension of the Islamist Movements," ESPRIT, January 1980), who says he found it in Habib

Boulares. The term seems to have appeared in Muslim Maghrebian milieus around 1970, to make a distinction between *moslim* and *islami*, the latter being those who see Islam as a political ideology.

6. On this point, see the article by Souhayr Belhassen, "Tunisian Islamist Women," in "Islam and Politics in the Maghreb," 1981.
7. See the book by Jean-Pierre Charnay, "Technique and Geosociology," 1984, which is very enlightening for the comparison. Let us note as points of comparison: the will to go beyond tribal segmentation by imposing the sharia, the establishment of state elements, the search for international legitimacy, the confusion between nationalism (Rifian? Moroccan?) and Islamic legitimacy, the reference to an ideology and a political perspective (p 61), but also the remaining tribal segmentation, of the traditional forms of war and a daily tribal politics on the part of Abd el-Krim at a very time when he was trying to go beyond tribalism. This is definitely the position of politics in the Afghan resistance. Likewise, Abd el-Krim, like the Afghan Islamists before the Soviet invasion, came up against the distrust of the ulema.

## 1. State and Society in Afghanistan

The spontaneous uprisings against the communist regime in 1978 and 1979 were aimed at the state itself as much as they were the Marxist regime. The imposition of communism appeared as a new and even more radical phase of the penetration of rural areas by the state apparatus. These two dimensions: anti-statism and rejection of Marxism, are profoundly intertwined. And yet, the attitude of rural areas toward the state has always been more ambiguous than one might think. The Afghan state is born in the tribes, the symbols of legitimacy it manipulates are not foreign to the peasants, and many leaders of the resistance have a plan for a state, the Islamic state. At the same time, the recent history of Afghanistan is made up of revolts against the central government and of resistance to penetration by the state apparatus. It is these complex relations that we shall examine here.

Pitting the state against society is always somewhat artificial. And yet, that separation in Afghanistan is empirically essential to the observer. It is seen in rural surroundings, with the administrative structures removed from inhabited places. It is perceived in the clothing and behavior of the social protagonists, just as it is expressed in daily discourse.<sup>1</sup> The state is definitely the opposite of the peasant, who devotes a solid and mutual scorn to the civil servant. There is actually only one real city, Kabul, the capital, where the distinction between the state and society blurs. But there are indeed two Afghanistans: the city (*shahr*), the place of innovation (*bid'at*), the origin of the civil servant, the teacher, soldier and communist, all "intellectuals" and "bare heads" (*sar-luchak*), presumed to be infidels and arrogant, and the province (*atraf*), the place of religion, tradition (*sunnat*) and continuity.



The drama of power is played out against both backgrounds. In the city, politics (*syasat*) has its audience of loyal spectators (students and the state bourgeoisie), but it is followed half-heartedly by the peasant, who hears the news from the city while playing with the buttons on his radio looking for music: The "game of kings" (*padshahgardi*) only affects him if it threatens his daily life. The drama of power in rural areas is the struggle of the khan for local domination: Broadening his following, being recognized as an arbiter and thereby increasing his wealth and backing: These are the ideals of the khan.<sup>2</sup> The struggle sometimes assumes violent forms in tribal areas, but it is behind closed doors. Whatever the outcome, it never modifies traditional structures.

These two universes are in constant interaction, either in the daily form of the eating away of rural society by the government apparatus and the harassment of that same apparatus by private clientele, or in the paroxystic form of the cultural revolution ordered from above (as under King Amanullah from 1924 to 1928, or the Khalqi regime of 1978 and 1979) and the rural uprising in the name of the jihad (in 1928 and 1979). In these crisis situations, ideological references transcend clientelistic and tribal behavior, which nevertheless reemerge in the forms of political organization (including in the Communist Party).

More than a sociological definition, it is their relationship to the political realm that distinguishes the two camps, neither of which is stable or homogeneous. The identification of the city with progress and the rural areas with tradition is more imaginary than real. Both are undergoing changes, experience continuity and show profound diversity. The universe of the city has definitely changed since it juxtaposed a court and a bazaar. Now, alongside the aristocracy, one finds a new state bourgeoisie (civil servants, students, the military), which exists only in relationship with a new state apparatus whose top levels it does not control.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, the merchant bourgeoisie has played a major role since the 1930's. In rural areas, a strong ethnic mosaic with often vague identities results in subtle hierarchies and different relationships with the state, ranging from the dominant ethnic group of the Pashto to the isolated groups such as the artisans in tribal areas, who have only a negative identity, for they are situated even below any ethnic reference.<sup>4</sup> Migrations, evictions and reclassifications have churned the rural areas, especially in the north, since the end of the past century. The introduction of the market economy, the population increase and state intervention have accentuated social cleavages and permitted the emergence of wealthy landowners and entrepreneurs around the cities. Radios and trucks accelerate the circulation of news. We must also make a distinction between the tribal areas and nontribal areas, even if the transition is sometimes vague. Every Afghan refers to a patrilinear genealogy and a group of relatives living as a fairly endogamous solidarity group (the *qawm*), whatever its sociological basis: tribe, clan, professional group (*qawm* of mullahs or barbers), caste (the *bari* [slave caste] of Nuristan), religious group (the *sayyad*), ethnic group (*munjani*), village community or mere expanded family. But we reserve the term "tribe" (*qabila*) for the *qawm* endowed with a precise common law, an autonomous system of values vis-a-vis Islam (honor, vengeance, and so on), and a set of specific institutions: These are essentially the Pashto areas of the east, where we find the *pashtunwali*, both code and ideology, and the institution of the *jirga*,



assemblies of all the men.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the big tribes have a territorial base (Mohmand, Jadran, Jaji, and so on).

For the Pashto in the west, essentially the Durrani, the case is more complex. There is indeed a tribal memory, in the sense that membership in the tribe and the clan is always known and paraded. Loyalty goes to the big families, such as the royal family, but also the Karzay for the Popolzay tribe. One also refers to the tribal mythology of the grand jirga and egalitarianism. However, the tribal institutions are far from having the vigor they achieve in the tribes of the east and even among the Ghilzay and the influence of the ulema is stronger among the Durrani. Can one speak of detribalization? Actually, it would appear that the Durrani have never known the degree of tribalism of the east.<sup>6</sup> Always more tied to the state systems (Safavides, then the amir of Kabul), they rather rapidly produced a kind of aristocracy strengthened by gifts of land from the monarchy (the *jagir*). However, the Durrani live as an integral part of the Pashto tribal world, even its cradle.

While there has never been any Afghan nation, there is definitely an Afghan state whose history we can trace. There is a discernable place of power. On the other hand, forms of evasion, infiltration or radical dissent that society has pitted against the state and that culminate in the current resistance are more difficult to envisage in political terms, especially since the state did not emerge in transcendence because it is historically rooted in one sector of society: the tribal confederations. We are therefore going to trace the genesis of the state as well as the articulation between the state and society.

## A. The Genesis of the Afghan State

### 1. The Tribal Confederation

The Afghan state was set up in the 18th century by the crystallization of a tribal confederation into a dynastic state. Ahmad Shah, from the Saddozay clan of the Popolzay tribe, headed an Abdali confederation in 1747, renamed the Durrani confederation, and set about conquering the space between Persia and the Indus.<sup>7</sup> The Saddozay dynasty would be followed in 1818 by another Durrani dynasty, the Mohammedzay clan from the Barakzay tribe, in power until 1978. The confederation (*ulus*) came about as the result of a plan of conquest seeking booty, through looting or tribute. Political and military forms are characteristic of tribal warfare. War is temporary and decided by the council of clan chiefs (limited jirga). The battle corps is made up of all warriors in arms (*lashkar*). The organization is that of traditional society, but the *lashkar* generally has a supreme and temporary leader whose room to maneuver is limited because he is always suspected of favoring his clan. He is above all a war leader<sup>8</sup> with whom a contract is made. Legitimacy stems from enthronement by a great tribal jirga (assembly of all warriors). The grand jirga, which is the founding myth of the Afghan state, would reappear in times of crisis (enthronement of Nader Khan in 1929). There is no patriotism, but a profound feeling of cultural identity. Loyalty goes to the limited group and the tribal code (*pashtunwali*), not to the Pashto community or the state. Joining the enemy to better achieve tribal values (vengeance of self-affirmation) is not perceived as a betrayal. "To make Pashto" (to identify with values) is more important in tribal milieus than "to be Pashto" (identify with an ethnic community or a nation).<sup>9</sup>

## 2. From the Amir to the State

The relationship between the tribal confederation and the central state is not what one finds in Morocco between *dar as-siba* and *dar al-makhzen*, meaning between the autonomous tribal area and an area subordinate to the central government, because the Afghan tribes (especially the Durrani, but also the Ghilzay) see the central government as their authorized leader. By proxy, it administers common conquests aiming at the redistribution to the tribes of the material or honorary benefits. The tribes perceive of the state as on their periphery, responsible for managing the moving space of conquests won by the tribal confederations, of which the state is but the perpetuation. On their own territory, the presence of the state seems redundant and useless. And yet, the entire historical effort of the Afghan state is to reverse that relationship in order to move from the periphery to the center. Nevertheless, the state will never escape from its original legitimacy and even when it attains its most Westernized form, it will remain tribal and Pashto.

The history of the Afghan state (*dawlat*) from 1747 to our day is that of the quest for autonomy of the state apparatus (*hokumat*) vis-a-vis the tribes. Naturally, the state machinery is detribalized in the sense that a given tribe ceases holding precise responsibilities, but it remains subordinate to the patronage relations of the *qawm*. The highest levels of the state (the *dawlat*) remain the property of the Mohammedzay establishment. This development of the state apparatus brings out new social strata (intelligentsia, army, state bourgeoisie), a product of the government educational system that enjoys a considerable expansion starting in 1950 (from 450 students in 1945 to 7,000 in 1975, 90 percent of which will be employed by the state).<sup>10</sup> These new strata will fit poorly into traditional society, without thereby dominating the state, on which not only their professional but their ideological existence depends, for they find in it their only universalistic reference. In this process of expansion of the state machinery to the entire country (tribal or other zones), the government has relied on three figures of legitimization: tribalism, Islam and nationalism.

That which appears with the founding of the Durrani dynasty in 1747 is an autonomous, discernable place of power. This state (*dawlat*) is a holding that is fought over based on relatively precise rules. Whatever the case, a clan furnishes the sovereign (Saddozay until 1818 and Mohammedzay until 1978), and matrimonial alliances determine a configuration of possible factions and intrigues that bring into the game the non-Durrani tribes, generally through the mothers of the suitors. Posts are distributed among the major Durrani families (which will be true until 1973, at least for the army). There is no lack of suitors, generally from the close family (brothers and cousins),<sup>11</sup> inasmuch as Muslim law does not recognize the right of primogeniture. The choice is made either by consensus (the grand *jirga*) or by the fate of arms, often highly symbolic wars in which the decision -- since all the suitors are Durrani -- is made by the non-Durrani Pashto tribes (Ghilzay in 1880 in favor of Abdurrahman against his cousin Ayyub Khan, Pashto from the east in 1929 in favor of Nader Khan against Amanullah and Bachaye Saqqao). Original tribalism is reinforced by a matrimonial policy in which only the wives from the great families have political influence. An establishment is thus built based

on the Durrani aristocracy and the great families related to it. This establishment becomes autonomous with respect to its tribal origins in the sociological sense. Neither the tribal code nor the tie to tribal areas nor even the use of the Pashto language are pertinent any longer, but the phantasmagorical reference to tribal legitimacy remains dominant, along with the influence of patronage and genealogies. It is in that sense that we shall speak of a tribal state.<sup>12</sup>

From the very beginning up until our time, modernization has been encouraged by the state, of which it is the main vector of reinforcement, even legitimation. Until Abdurrahman (1880-1901), the state machinery was one with the court, even if the need for an army that would not be a mere tribal lashkar appeared as early as Dost Mohammed (1826-1863).<sup>13</sup> The reforms of Abdurrahman stem from no reformist ideology. His conception of modernization was purely instrumental: rationalizing the government machinery in order to make it more effective, without modifying traditional society. One adopts the techniques and one reforms key, isolated sectors, setting off a slow process of modernization through the recurrence of society. This process is a consequence and not an end. The state is strengthened based on the army. For that purpose, arms and money are needed and consequently, manufacturing plants must be set up. Taxes must be reorganized and increased. Immediately, the state intervenes in the economy, while ensuring a better administrative and military organization of the country. At the same time, the amir, in order to limit tribalism, advances Islamic legitimacy for the first time. He is an amir by divine right, the defender of religion, and he imposes the sharia in order better to ensure the right of government,<sup>14</sup> while trying to integrate the clergy into the state apparatus (through control of the madrasa, the *waqf* [inalienable right whose enjoyment is devoted to a religious institution] and wages, even through intervention in the theological domain<sup>15</sup>).

The introduction of purely instrumental reforms came about within the framework of the traditional exercise of power in Medieval Islam. De facto power of the amir, winner of the tribal game, is legitimized by the consensus of tribes and the a posteriori enthronement of the ulema, instructed by the amir to ensure the public welfare (*maslahat*) and the defense of religion. The technical reforms of Abdurrahman gave rise to no opposition within this framework. It is not the introduction in itself of segments of modernization into the state apparatus that forced society to conform with modernity. In Afghanistan as elsewhere, it is not modernization that is the problem (meaning the introduction of new technical factors or the rationalization of segments of the state apparatus). Rather, it is modernity, meaning the hypothesis according to which modernization presumes a "cultural revolution," a modification in ways of thinking and ideological references.

Everything changes starting with Amanullah (1919-1928). Faced with the limits encountered by modernization, the state would try to remodel civil society in order better to integrate it. Rhetoric patterned after that of the Enlightenment, but also of the *salafiyya* (Islamic reformist movement), in favor of education, progress and a certain anticlericalism, is authoritarian and statist. In Afghanistan, the discernment of modernist elites comes in 1911, with Tarzi in the newspaper SERAJ-UL AKHBAR (1911-1919) and remains unchanged until and including the communists. The check on progress remains the alienation and

illiteracy of the peasants. Since the revolution in thinking, manipulated by the government, is the condition of progress, the question of education becomes the leitmotiv of progressive rhetoric.<sup>16</sup> At that very moment, starting in 1924, the consensus between the state and society, largely constituted by mutual indifference, is broken. The result of the slow process of the autonomization of the government apparatus is the establishment of a new space in the political game, an urban space peopled by actors whose references are from a West more imaginary than real.<sup>17</sup> It is then and only then that a "tradition" is constituted in the face of this emergence of alterity at the highest levels of power. In a sense, traditional society, far from being *per se*, becomes a pole of opposition to the state. Inversely, it is the spectre of the state, which, in order to define, needs to invent an unchanged world, a set world, one stable for centuries and incapable of reflecting upon itself, without "superior knowledge." It is the whole metaphor of the dawn, of light, the torch (*seraj*) lit starting at the end of the 19th century, facing a supposedly obscurantist rural world. The slogan of the intelligentsia, whether it be liberal, Marxist or even radical Islamist, is expressed in the KABUL TIMES of 29 August 1970, therefore, during the constitutional, royalist period: "What our peasants need is complete brainwashing."<sup>18</sup>

### 3. Unfindable Nation

The state of the Kabul amir was stabilized by foreign imperialisms. Afghanistan became a nation state because it was a buffer state. The state could not have imposed its rule on the tribes and occupy its own territory without English money and arms, abundant from 1880 to 1919. The border was practically traced by the British, in agreement with the Russians. The British imposed the Gandamak Treaty (May 1879) and the Durand line (1893) on the Afghans; the Russians the 1888 accord (Amou-Darya) and that of 1895 (Pamir), all guaranteed by the Anglo-Russian agreements of St. Petersburg in 1907. The borders thus defined were purely strategic and corresponded to no ethnic or historic limit. As one English analyst notes: "What did the term 'scientific border' mean in this connection? (...) it would have been impossible to draw in the north-western part of our Indian empire a border that would respond to ethnic, political and military requirements.... What was meant by 'scientific border' was the best strategic boundary that could be used as a line of defense against an invasion from Central Asia."<sup>19</sup>

How do the Afghans perceive of that territory? As Elphinstone notes in 1809: "They have no name for their country."<sup>20</sup> There are two possible perceptions: that which, territorial and dynastic, identifies Afghanistan with the domain of the emir of Kabul (therefore, a reference to the tribal origin); the other religious, identifying it with a space remaining Muslim between the lands of the infidels (the British and Russians) or the heretics (the Persians). It is the *mellat*, the nation in the sense of Ottoman law, meaning a religious community. The *mellat* is a geographic subunit of the *umma*. That is how the great mass of Afghan peasants still perceives the notion of nation. Until 1924 (the date of the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate and the first waves of reform of King Amanullah), it was in the name of the defense of the Muslim *mellat* facing the infidels that the amir legitimized the state. But in 1924, once Afghanistan had been recognized by the concert of nations and the caliphate had been abolished, such a reference had no more meaning and the state



then tried to promote a purely Afghan nationalism. Already the flag and national anthem had appeared under Abdurrahman,<sup>21</sup> followed by the hymn under Habibullah (1901-1919).<sup>22</sup> The 1923 Constitution defines Afghanistan as a nation of which any resident is a citizen whatever his religion (the end of the reference to the Muslim mellat).<sup>23</sup> The break with Islamic legitimacy is also marked by the search for an "Indo-Aryan" pre-Islamic past (whence the importance of archeology) and the invention of a folklore made of heteroclitic elements (the "national" sport is a Turkman game, *bozkashi*; the "national" dance, the *atan*, comes from Paktya). History is rewritten as if the entity Afghanistan had existed since the beginning of time. The schools are naturally the main vector of this nationalistic ideology.

But the state would always vacillate between reference to an abstract nation, defined based on its own sovereignty, and reference to a Pashto nation, defined by an ethnic group that has not yet completed its process of national realization (the only way out for other ethnic groups being "Pashtonization"). While the first definition had no response anywhere, the second would pull along the non-Durrani Pashto (not belonging to the tribal aristocracy), who would find in Pashto nationalism the ideology of their social ascent and the means of taking the power monopoly away from the establishment. They would mainly recruit from among young people recently educated, urbanized and detribalized (mainly of Ghilzay origin). It would be among them that the Khalq faction of the Communist Party would gain a foothold, the last avatar of an exacerbated but minority Pashto nationalism, even within the Pashto linguistic community. Reference to the mellat would reemerge with the resistance.

#### 4. Extension of the State Apparatus

What interests us here is Abdurrahman's policy of extending the state apparatus until the communist coup. It was with this policy that the Babrak regime and the Soviets would try to forge a new link.

The Khalqi regime of 1978 tried to integrate social relations into the logic of the state, considering society as a collection of individuals incapable of planning their fate and finding themselves without any social tie, once the supposed feudalism was abolished. Previously, the state had accommodated civil society, recognizing its positive aspects.

Even if the state was born of conquest, it could not be imposed by brute force. Furthermore, it used the traditional networks of power to make a connection with society and modify it through its use of these networks. In addition, it manipulated symbols of legitimacy not necessarily challenged by the peasant.

Lacking an administration whose ramifications crisscrossed the entire rural territory, the state delegated part of its functions to intermediate officials, whose power it strengthened by making them the institutionalized representatives of their community. These officials are not necessarily the khan (or bay), whose power, founded on the wealth and power of the qawm, is much greater and more informal. Rather, they are the malek or arbab, terms sometimes translated as village chief. They actually represent a local qawm (there can be several malek per village) and are elected by family heads. In exchange for

compensation from the family and sometimes a subsidy from the administration, they handle the civil registry, the census, conscription, tax collection and accompany their administrative "charges" through administrative procedures. The position of the malek is ambiguous because they represent the state in the community and the community vis-a-vis the state. In the years preceding the coup d'etat, they tended to play on this ambiguity in order to strengthen their personal position. But they are considered by the peasants as their own. In contrast, regarding justice, the state systematically took the right to judge away from the village assemblies and the nongovernmental *gazi* [religious judge applying the sharia].

The symbols of legitimacy manipulated by the state have varied. The original symbol, that of tribal legitimacy, is naturally valid only in tribal, mainly Durrani areas, but remains strong there. It was in the name of tribal solidarity that Abdurrahman asked the Durrani to people northwestern Afghanistan<sup>25</sup> and that Amanullah made an appeal from Kandahar to regain his throne in 1928. It was in the name of tribal solidarity that Nader Khan retook Kabul from Bacha-ye Saqqao in 1929. The process of legitimization is here enthronement by the great jirga, the founding myth of the Afghan state, actually very rarely applied (1747 and 1929). A second symbol is constituted by the outward prerogatives of any de facto power because for the peasant, the fact of power is not illegitimate in itself and there is de facto power as soon as it is demonstrated. One recognizes the power that exists because it exists and because one does not seek to seize the place from which it is exercised. The state itself is therefore not challenged. Rather, it is its right of encroachment that causes a problem. With the exception of the tribal areas and Hazarajat, Afghanistan has always been subjected to a central government, whose legitimacy since the Muslim conquest is symbolized by the coining of money and the *khotba* [Friday preaching] in the name of the sovereign. The 1923 Constitution still makes these two elements outward signs of legitimacy (Article 7). It is de facto power and it matters little who embodies it (reflection after the communist coup: "Is Taraki the new king?"). The state (*dawlat*) is not a stake for the peasant, who seeks to protect himself from the encroachment of a government apparatus (*hokumat*) that will last under any regime or sovereign.

Third legitimacy: Islam. The need for a strong central government to defend the community of believers from the infidels is accepted by everyone and that figure of legitimacy returns in periods of crisis, growing vague in the absence of any outward danger. Naturally, this legitimacy comes into play only if the sovereign is perceived as Muslim. Finally, the last figure of legitimacy: the nation, which works only for the detribalized Pashto, the others remaining more receptive to the tribal myth and the non-Pashto not identifying with this image (an Afghan will never call himself an Afghan if he is not Pashto).

## B. Elusive Society

### 1. Externalization of the State

As we have said, the externality of the state with respect to civil society has empirical evidence. The machinery of state is constantly marked in every

sense of the term. Designated by a distinct symbol (place, clothing, language), they are isolated and are the object of procedures of neutralization on the part of the village community. This neutralization obviously presumes a certain number of concessions to tasks which state machinery is supposed to carry out (taxes, conscription, and so on). The state apparatus in rural areas is first of all a place, which is precisely called the hokumat (meaning at one and the same time state apparatus, government and administrative building) or more vaguely ta'mir (the building). This place is apart from the villages, even if a purely functional bazaar is attached to it. One finds the school and all local officials there, backed by a few dozen soldiers. Government employees do not wear turbans, but the astrakhan cap. Physical behavior is different also. Dressed in the European fashion, the civil servant does not have the same posture as that allowed by the roominess of the traditional garment. He will also move about differently.<sup>26</sup> Whether the government employee speaks Pashto or Persian, it will be a very administrative language, quite removed from local dialects, especially since the educated are quite fond of using neologisms transcribed directly from English or French and said to express phenomena not translatable in the cultural context (*dimocrasi*, *displin*, *reform*, *libral*, *kulcher*, and so on). But at the same time, the physical separation of the civil servant from the places of village conviviality (the mosque or guest house, *hujra*) means that he needs an intermediary to communicate with peasant society. That intermediary, the malek, can thus control the information supplied to the administration.

The marking of the state apparatus by traditional society, once this original separation is noted, takes different forms. The offensive form, which we shall see later, consists of penetrating this apparatus. But one more benign aspect of this offensive is corruption. If corruption is indexed and kept within acceptable limits, it is not a scandal for the peasant. It makes it possible to reject regulation because confronted with norms whose text and purpose escape the peasant (for example, farm production quotas, veterinary inspection campaigns, and so on), he can set up his own norms through money. Corruption binds the civil servant and drains the logic of regulation of its substance. The other more passive form of resistance consists of interposing a systematic screen between the civil servant and village life. The administration frequently sends civil servants on missions in the villages. The villagers always suspect the mission of an unconfessed purpose and try to convince the delegates to leave again as soon as possible! Ethnologists report that a harmless team of officials from the Ministry of Agriculture coming to examine the conditions of the fight against crickets were paid a lump sum by the inhabitants of one village provided they promised never to return!<sup>27</sup> In that sense, the proverbial hospitality of the Afghans is also a kind of screen. The guest, assigned to a precise place (the *hujra* or guest room) which he cannot leave without offending his host, is surrounded by a tight formality in which the ceremony of greetings and meals leaves little room for the exercise of authority or mere research (ethnologists and tourists, likened to those coming from the government, know something about this). The foreigner is confronted with a whole game of evasion, excuses and shilly-shallying. The official is always somewhere else, the horses in the mountain and truth in the well.

But what is there to hide? Does village society have a positive side, an autonomous life that turns it into a being per se confronted with the intrusion of the government apparatus? That is the crux of the question of relations between the government and civil society.

Let us note, first of all, that the desire to duck state intervention does not imply that one lives outside of the state. Peasant society does not stand guard at the borders against invaders because it has no borders. There is truly no autarchic economy that would make it possible to define the introduction of the market economy as the violation of a space. There is no private territory that would insulate the community. Finally and above all, there is no insulatable place of power within civil society that could be the stakes of a strategy of possession. The places of power: the administrative post or the malek, now a civil servant, are defined and set by the state. They can then constitute the stakes in a conflict between society and the state, which is more vulnerable because of its designated targets. In guerrilla warfare, the rebels know what to go after and whom to kill. The reverse is less true.

Power in Afghan peasant society is neither a place nor a person. Rather, it is an elusive network, always to be maintained and reconstituted: the network of a clientele, in which prestige also corresponds to certain services. Power exists only because of a consensus and is never given once and for all. There are no feudal ties, of a commitment through an oath. Afghan society is not feudal. Rather, what one has is more the constant imbalance of the *potlatch* [gifts requiring allegiance from recipient] type than the stable architecture of a feudality. A khan derives his power only from the consensus of his *qawm*, except when his power has been institutionalized by the state, a possible case among the Durrani by the 18th century through the institution of the *jagir* (the *iqta'* of classic Islam) and more frequent in recent decades, in which economic wealth makes it possible to gain the good graces of the administration. However, this has never been the general rule. The khan must always show, by his generosity and availability, that he alone is worthy to fulfill the post: no khan without a *dastakhan* (without a tablecloth, meaning an open table).<sup>28</sup> Elphinstone states it clearly: "Power consists in the number of a man's relations."<sup>29</sup> And if the son inherits great prestige from his father, he must nevertheless preserve it based on informal but restrictive rules: inviting others to eat, arbitrating and effectively defending the interests of his *qawm* vis-a-vis the state.<sup>30</sup>

Actually, it is the state that has tried to freeze the village communities as nearly administrative entities able to be managed through their malek.<sup>31</sup> More precisely, it is one of the two possible options: Either one freezes the community, and the role of the state is then to manage the mosaic of *qawm* enclosed within themselves, with the state alone having a universal quality (the policy of the kings and the Soviets), or one breaks the village community in order to address a people considered to be a universal not aware of itself (the policy of Amanullah, the Khalqi and perhaps the radical Islamists). Traditionally speaking, the state has always treated village communities like a whole: Chores are collective (maintenance of roads running by the village, construction of the school). In the case of rebellion of an unsolved crime, fines are also collective. The state, erecting the *qawm* as an entity it knows



only through the intermediary of the malek, therefore strengthens the authority of the latter, which now has other weapons than the consensus. It can help avoid military service and intercede for taxes and fines.

## 2. Inconsistent State

At a very time when the state apparatus tries to territorialize, freeze and integrate village communities, it becomes the stakes of a strategy itself, not a strategy of the conquest of power, but of tapping by the qawm. Actually, only two groups have a strategy of winning power: the grand figures of the establishment (which leave the general structure intact) and the intelligentsia (in the form of a coup d'etat). For the other groups, the goal is to connect the qawm to a level of the state apparatus in keeping with its importance, from the lowest local official to the minister. From this connection, one expects material benefits (posts for the young, prebends, tax exemptions and exemptions from conscription), but especially the continuation of the local power game and the certainty that it is the traditional rules of the political game that will determine the operation of the state. If one is to judge by the recent history of Afghanistan, this strategy of the qawm has been successful. The state of Zaher Shah and Daoud (1933-1973, 1973-1978) was tribal and "qawmic" in its operation, even and especially during the constitutional period, which observed the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.

While the government apparatus definitely has a quite bureaucratic consistency, the state itself does not seem to have any other plan than to perpetuate itself. One interesting example is the constitutional episode (1963-1973). The 1965 and 1969 elections were free and yet, the constitutional period was a failure than many observers attribute to the nonlegalization of political parties. However, this absence of parties is a consequence and not a cause of the weakness of the political class,<sup>32</sup> for even the existence of clandestine parties is very late (1965 for the PDPA, the Communist Party). The political class is depoliticized. Provincial deputies intervene as representatives of their local qawm in order to obtain subsidies and privileges. They perceive of the state as an outside, powerful agent of which one must take maximum advantage. The establishment is not united by an overall plan and follows a clan policy. There is no sense of the state in the leadership class. Political personnel are determined by family and patronage splits: Loyalties and purposes do not have the state as their object. There is no universal factor or rather, if the latter determines the rhetoric (nation, state, Islam or class struggle for the Marxist opposition), it does not determine individual behavior or even the strategy of a group (which explains, for example, why clan struggles assume a suicidal aspect in the Communist Party). The state (dawlat) is a stake and the strategy of a qawm consists of being articulated around the state apparatus (hokumat).

This absence of a universal element results in an ideological vacuum. The political vocabulary borrowed from the West shifts from one group to another in the most artistic vagueness. The word "revolution" may designate the communist coup d'etat as well as the rural revolt. The network of patronage and personal ties may ignore the most antagonistic political splits. The communist Parcham (nicknamed "royal communist party") is tied to the royalist

establishment (Anahita Ratebzad is the daughter of a noblewoman), the brother of Islamic intellectual Gahiz is an important member of the Khalq, and so on.

The atmosphere in Parliament (elected with 90 percent abstentions) is anarchic: the quorum never attained, commotion, fantastic, naive speeches.<sup>33</sup> Typically, several villages have rejected the introduction of secret ballots and separate voting booths. The state is seen as the court once was by deputies, with each seeking favors there. On the stage of the political theater, it is definitely a political drama that is played. When we speak of theater, it is scarcely a metaphor: Debate is broadcast on the radio and the young lycee students applaud, shout or imitate the speeches during recess. The democratic experience is purely formal and Western-type democracy has no meaning except in a certain set of problems: identification of civil society and the state, the appearance of a political space that is something other than a political theater. In other words, the stakes debated in the political sphere must be those of all society and not the staging of imported problems that actually conceal a struggle for power within a limited group. The depoliticization of the political class, especially when it actually comes from the rural world (which is the case for the two parliaments) is another consequence of the separation between society and the state. The intelligentsia fiercely fights this democratic parliament from which it is excluded and which pits two old accomplices against one another: rural society and the tribal establishment. Both communist and Islamist students demonstrate and even obtain the resignation of the Youssouf Liberal Cabinet in 1965, to the indifference of the rural areas as well as the court.

### 3. Positive Nature of the Rural Community?

The qawm is a network, the village a territory, and even if there is often agreement between the two (because the village frequently but not necessarily corresponds to a qawm), their mode of political operation is quite different. As a network, the qawm, lacking territoriality, cannot be taken over by the state. Inversely, qawm solidarities penetrate the very heart of the state.

The existence of peasant communities in Afghanistan causes a problem and the authors shift from negation to the defense of that community.<sup>34</sup> We shall not delve into the details of the discussion. However, one must make a distinction between two things: the village community and the power networks. In order to understand, one must deterritorialize the notion of solidarity group and seek the positive nature of rural society in a cultural ensemble that does not come down to the "village community." The phenomena of village solidarity on which one bases one's search to define the notion of "village community" are trivial: the presence of communal pasture, collective work for irrigation canals, internal arbitration of quarrels, trading services for emergency work projects, and so on, nothing with which to constitute a countergovernment. Likewise, one sees the appearance of forms of self-regulation in extraordinary situations. As in the temporary bazaars that flourish in the summer in the central region of the country, the two main communities (Durrani and Ghilzay) each elect a malek in charge of order,<sup>35</sup> with the blessing of the administrative authorities. It is only in the strongly tribal zones that the village has restrictive institutions and a specific common law.<sup>36</sup> Only here can one

speaking of an autonomous village community. Otherwise, the existence of village solidarity does not define a counterpower to the state since it gets along quite well being included in the state structure. If there is a positive aspect to Afghan civil society, it is to be sought more in the autonomy of the village community, in that which, within civil society, refers to the state, but to a virtual state other than the one existing.

Beyond the question of the village communities, Afghan rural society is a society of law. There is a legal body of law: the sharia, a judicial institution: the qazi, and a legitimizing reference: Islam. Little does it matter whether this unit actually functions. Competing both with the interplay of the khan and the penetration of the state, these references were mainly symbolic under the old regime. But it is that very symbolic nature that outlined a space of real autonomy with respect to state penetration, especially since reference to the universal of the *umma* was accompanied by another universal, at least for Persian-speaking areas: reference to an age-old culture, classic Persian culture, precisely the culture of a state and a state older than the contemporary Afghan state (is the Persian spoken in Afghanistan, more literary than its Iranian cousin, not called *dari*, precisely the "language of the court"?). Paradoxically enough, one can say that the whole cultural effort of the Pashto state of the Musahiban (the family of Nader Shah and his brothers), in power since 1929, like that of the communists, is to use the state to impose a culture that is in fact of the people (Pashto oral literature, recodified by a "Pashto Academy" created in 1935), when the resistance of the Persian-speakers to this Pashtonization is through reference to a scholarly culture, popularized in schoolbooks such as the "*Panj-kitab*," in which one finds Saadi and Hafiz. Peasants and the educated have an instrumental vision of the current state, which is not in itself perceived as containing a universal element. The only function conceded to it, other than the public order, is to be the agent of a universal conceived before it (the sharia, classic culture). If it wants to impose its own standards, then it is the state that appears to be particularist.

In order to understand this, one has to admit that between the village community and the state is another network, that of the educated: ulema, qazi, scribes and village poets. This network has its training grounds: the Koranic schools and the madrasa. It would be false to think that knowledge transmitted there is purely religious and legal. The Afghan clergy is profoundly imbued with the Persian humanities. Many religious leaders are from the Sufi movement (Muslim mystic) and accompany legal formalism with a spiritual and literary dimension. The network of madrasa trained all the clergy and most civil servants until around 1950. We shall go into more detail in the following chapter concerning the background and references of the Afghan ulema, but it is definitely a question of Muslim universalism. Around 1950, the state instituted, not only a system of government schools, but also a national School of Theology (1951). Judgeships are reserved for graduates of the system. The system of nongovernmental madrasa has not been abolished, but it is left out, socially and politically. The government system trains intellectuals who, whether Islamists or communists, think in relationship to state problems, while the alim is concerned with knowledge, with the question of power remaining contingent. The opposition is not between rural particularism and the universal

nature of the state, but rather, between the educated person and the intellectual,<sup>37</sup> both containing a universal element. However, the ties between the individual and his qawm are looser in the case of the educated person than in that of the peasant or even the intellectual of rural origin. The function of the educated person for the peasant is to embody a universal. Too strict of a tie with a precise solidarity group would cost him prestige, while the khan by definition exists only in relationship with a qawm. It is within society itself, considered in its references below the state apparatus, that a set of problems appears between the particular and the universal and in connection with which the modern state appears rather to be a manifestation of particularism.

The interplay of the khan, as we have said, is behind closed doors. It does not bother the order of the state, of which it may be a loyal intermediary. The alim is related to a universal that the state can only use in a period of confrontation with the non-Muslim world. In normal times, the state must exclude the clergy and Islamic references, precisely in order not to appear as contingent and in order to appear as the only access to the universal, identified with modernity and therefore, with secularity. The peasant's references will oscillate between these two figures of the rural world: the khan and the alim, the hujra and the mosque, with a predominance of the former in tribal areas and the latter in nontribal areas, with the Islamic reference reappearing in both in case of crisis.

Rural society, beyond the hypothetical village community, is a space of law and institutions, even if these standards are greatly imaginary. Let us look at the political vocabulary of the peasants. Syassat, politics, has to do with the city and the state (dawlat). Zolm designates what is arbitrary, de facto power, tyranny, exercised by the government employees representing the state apparatus (hokumat) as well as the local khan. The term "sunnat" (tradition), has to do with imitation of the Prophet. It is an ethical model and not a state of society. It is impossible to translate "traditional society" into Dari in the sense that we generally use the word because the imitation of the Prophet, as an archetype, cannot be compared with a "modern" society. Modernity has the sense of innovation and therefore, of impiety, which will not prevent the peasant from introducing segments of modernization, such as the radio, which are nothing more than inert objects.

Islam designates an image of social justice, but without inherently containing any counterstate plan. It is neither a utopia, meaning a proposed counter-society, for the peasant is not a revolutionary, nor a political program, as it would be for the Islamist, because the peasant gives priority to the reform of behavior over that of structures. He sees in the "real" Islam a concrete normalcy that is experienced as economic and social protection, for example, regarding the matter of the ban on usury. It is an ethical vision, for at the same time, arbitrariness (zolm) and corruption are perceived as natural. Little does it matter that few of the powerful are just. What counts is that the peasant can judge and, even when defeated, refuses to yield to injustice.

References to justice are therefore ethical for the peasant, who is not acquainted with the arcane phrasings of the sharia and does not care about them.



It is Muslim to be just. On the contrary, the alim often has a formalistic, even casuistic, vision of the sharia. But while civil society in Afghanistan is much more than a juxtaposition of rural communities whose positive nature is not obvious, it is also due to this particular nature of Muslim law of being a nongovernmental but universalist right, capable of pursuing one's own exegesis and the formation of one's own interpretations outside of a state institution. This is why the problem of relations between civil society and the state is very specific in noncolonial Muslim countries.

Reference to Islam as a counterbalance to the arbitrariness of the state is certainly not recent, but has gained great importance since that state embarked upon a process of secularization starting in 1924. Penetration of the state apparatus is assimilated with secularization and the social exclusion of the ulema removes them from places of power and therefore, of corruption, crediting them with an honesty that not all would have assumed if they had enjoyed official posts. Whatever the case, even when the state has good intentions, its decisions are perceived as tyrannical because they take away from the peasant control of the entire process of his activities. The intellectual explains the rejection of the reforms by the peasant as a consequence of his alienation, while the peasant feels alienated, in the strict sense, by the determination of the state to rethink the relationship of the peasant with the production process.<sup>38</sup>

If there is a positive aspect to civil society, it is therefore not in the village community that it is to be sought, but in the reference to a universal beyond the segmentation into qawm. In Afghanistan, that universal has kept its agents, its networks of training and roots in traditional society. It is definitely the question of Islam that is fundamental.

#### NOTES

1. On this externality, see O. Roy: "Afghanistan, the War of the Peasants," in *REVOLTES LOGIQUES*, No 13, 1981, and especially, P. and M. Centlivres, "Village in Afghanistan," in *COMMENTAIRE*, No 16, 1981.
2. On the competition for power among prominent officials, see W. Azoy, "Buzkashi," University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982, and J. Anderson, "Khan and Kheyl," in Tapper, "The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran and Afghanistan," 1983.
3. On a typology of social strata linked with the state, see Z. Daoud, "L'Etat Monarchique dans la Formation Sociale Afghane," 1982.
4. A. Ahmed, "Order and Conflict in Muslim Society," *MIDDLE EAST JOURNAL*, spring 1982, p 168 and the following; P. Centlivres, "Problems of Ethnic Identity in Northern Afghanistan," "Iran Moderne," 1976, pp 8 and following.
5. A. Ahmed, *Op. cit.*, pp 88 and following; W. Steul, "Pashtunwali," 1981.

6. Elphinstone explains that there is a typical tribal model, whose example is among the Pashto in the east. Based on it, the other forms that one finds among the Durrani can be explained, even if they differ from the model (M. Elphinstone, "An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul," 1972, Vol. II, p 2, the first edition from 1815). Regarding tribalism among the non-Pashto, one can use the word in the strongest sense among the Nuristani and the Baluchis, but not among the Tajiks or the Uzbeks. For the Hazara, tribalism largely disappeared following the Pashto conquest. A more curious case, the Aymaq call themselves "tribal," but no one has ever been able to draw up a tribal map of the Aymaq country and the nomenclatures they provide are contradictory. It would appear that there is a kind of retribalization that is more imaginary than real at the time of the Pashto penetration at the end of the 19th century: A tribal mythology is created in order to have as much social reality as the rival (some Aymaq take the names of Pashto, even Baluchi clans; others call themselves Aymaq of the Tajik clan). Whatever the case, in none of the four groups is there any existence or memory of any tribal code or institutions, even if there is a systematic membership in a solidarity group: qawm has a broader meaning than tribe.
  
7. R. Newell, "The Struggle for Afghanistan," 1981, p 34; V. Gregorian, "The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan," 1969, p 48. The ethnogenesis of the Pashto is not well-known. They manifestly include peoples of diverse origins. One hears little about the Pashto tribes before the 18th century and Babour mentions them as a community of looters living south of Kabul. Their political emergence is certainly partially due to a population explosion and to their role as mercenaries in the Persian and Mogol armies. One distinguishes three main groups of tribes: the Durrani in the west, the Ghilzay between Kandahar and Kabul, the Pashto in the east on both sides of the current border between Afghanistan and Pakistan (Durand line).
  
8. The best description is certainly in the first book written about the Pashto, by the first British ambassador (Scottish, like most of the British serving in Afghanistan), Mountstuart Elphinstone, "An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul," first edition 1815, republished in 1972. See in particular, Vol. I, pp 211, 218, 330, and Vol. II, p 283: "For the consolidation of his power at home, (the king) depends to a great extent on foreign wars. If these are successful, his victories augment his reputation and his conquests provide him with the means of maintaining an army and of attracting Afghan chiefs by favors and rewards. The hope of booty prompts many tribes to join him, when he would have had difficulty subduing them." (Our translation.)
  
9. See A. Ahmed, "Pukhtun Economy and Society," 1980, pp 181 and 193.
  
10. Z. Daoud, Op. cit., p 101; L. Dupree, "Afghanistan," 1980, p 754; G. Etienne, "L'Afghanistan ou les Aleas de la Cooperation," 1972, p 172; Bernardin, "Education and International Aid in Afghanistan," in COOPERATION TECHNIQUE, No 68; G. Grassmuck, "Afghanistan: Some New Approaches," 1969, p 171; Z. Daoud, Op. cit., p 101.

11. Let us recall that hostility between cousins is traditional in the pashtunwali (*tarbor* means both cousin and enemy). From Abdurrahman to Zaher Shah, conflicts with cousins are commonplace.
12. For a (confusing) description of that establishment, see L. Adamec, "Who's Who of Afghanistan," 1975.
13. The best book (but very linear) on the modernization process is by Gregorian, *Op. cit.*, 1969. For Abdurrahman, see H. Kakar, "Government and Society in Afghanistan," 1979.
14. The sharia is wrongly viewed as a remnant of the Middle Ages. It is not rare, at the beginning of the 20th century, to see a return to the sharia occur in a modernist perspective. Actually, the sharia introduces a principle of universality of law and thus takes justice away from the local solidarity groups (the Afghan *qawm* or the Arab *acabiyya*). The modern state can only be built by breaking down infrastate solidarities. For an interesting example, see the imposition of the sharia against common law by Abd el-Krim at the time of the Rif war: Youssofi, in "Abd el-Krim et la Republique du Rif," 1976, pp 81 and 89 and the following.
16. Kakar, *Op. cit.*, pp 156, 157, 178.
17. An entire study should be made of what Asian intellectuals read at the time with respect to European authors (or books of introduction to those authors), who are mainly positivists and scientists.
18. Quoted in G. Etienne, *Op. cit.*, p 239.
19. C. Davies, "The Problem of the North-West Frontier," 1975, p 16.
20. M. Elphinstone, *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p 125.
21. V. Gregorian, *Op. cit.*, p 200; M. Schinasi, "Afghanistan at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," 1979, p 133.
22. H. Kakar, *Op. cit.*, p 10; V. Gregorian, *Op. cit.*, p 151.
23. P. and M. Centlivres, "Village in Afghanistan," in *COMMENTAIRE*, No 16, 1981; the text is the finest analysis of relations between the state and peasants.
24. R. Canfield describes (with admiration) the case of a *uluswal* [district] having a Hazara murderer arrested and sentenced for a crime that was the subject of a settlement between families, under the aegis of the "elders." R. Canfield, "Hazara Integration into the Afghan Nation," The Afghanistan Council, Occasional Paper, No 3.
25. R. Tapper, *Op. cit.*, p 245.

26. G. Etienne quotes the trivial case of civil servants demanding motor-scooters in order to get around, for they are symbols of modernism, while rejecting horses even though more practical. G. Etienne, Op. cit., p 109.
27. M. and R. Poulton, "Ri-Jang, A Tajid Village in Northern Afghanistan," EHESS thesis, 1979, Vol. III, p 137.
28. The literature on the dialectic of power among the khan, especially in tribal areas, is abundant. See all the writings of A. Ahmed and J. Anderson.
29. M. Elphinstone, Op. cit., Vol. I, p 328.
30. In certain cases of Nuristani tribes, what a khan must do to keep his rank is remarkably codified. In Waygal, for example, the precise number and frequency of collective meals that the khan gives for his village determines a scale of honorific titles. See S. Jones, "Men of Influence in Nuristan," 1973.
31. A recent example is given concerning the colonization of the Helmand Valley between 1953 and 1973. The state sets up qawm on new lands, negotiating with their malek. R. Scott, "Tribal and Ethnic Groups in the Helmand Valley," Occasional Paper, Afghanistan Council, p 3.
32. A. Rubinstein, "Soviet Policy Toward Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan," 1982, p 134; Z. Daoud, Op. cit., p 296 and the following; G. Grassmuck, Op. cit., p 172 and the following.
33. The KARAWAN newspaper of S. Kushkaki complains that the 216 deputies 216 political platforms (21 May 1973).
34. G. Etienne (Op. cit., pp 22 and 82) denies the existence of a real village community.
35. K. Ferdinand, "Nomad Expansion and Commerce in Central Afghanistan," in "Folk," Vol. 4, 1962, p 152 and the following.
36. A good example is that of the elected village militias entrusted with the task of enforcing community decisions. One finds descriptions of them among the Ghilzay for the past (M. Elphinstone, Op. cit., Vol. 2, p 153 and the following) and the Nuristani of Waygal for the present (L. Edelberg and "Nuristan," 1979, p 57).
37. On this subject, see the interview of P. and M. Centlivres by P. Bourdieu, "Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales," No 34, September 1980.
38. A good example in the agricultural domain is given by Gentelle: The state's introduction of the use of fertilizers, industrial crops (such as cotton) and mechanization causes the peasant to lose control of agricultural processes. The expert, mechanic or planner know more than he. P. Gentelle, "Afghanistan and International Aid," TIERS-MONDE, 1979, No 80.



## 2. Islam in Afghanistan

All Afghans are Muslims except for a few thousand Hindus and Sikhs and a few hundred Jews. Some 85 percent are Sunnites of the Hanafite sect, while the rest are Duodecimal Shiites (of the Jaffarite sect), with a small Ismaeli minority (100,000 to 200,000 persons). In a country where the notion of nation is very recent, in which the state is perceived as being external to society and where allegiance is to the community group, Islam remains the sole frame of reference common to all Afghans.

It is not enough to say that religion permeates the life of the Afghan peasant. It provides his intellectual horizons, system of values and code of behavior, however it might interfere with other codes such as the tribal system. Religion also supplies the sole legitimizing reference of universal value.

And yet, the sociological mainstay of religion differs depending on the milieu (tribal/nontribal, peasants/city dwellers), just as ideological references to religion vary (lay and fundamentalist, traditionalist and reformist, and so on). Consequently, there are different forms of religiosity, figures and dynamics. Among the religious figures, one must distinguish between the village mullah, the *alim* (doctor of law), the *sayyad* (supposedly a descendant of the Prophet), the *pir* (charismatic personage, sometimes at the head of a Sufi brotherhood), and finally, the Islamist intellectual. Among the forms of religiosity, one must distinguish between the people's religiosity, the legal orthodoxy of the *ulema* [Muslim scholar], the mystic of the Sufis and the political Islam of the Islamists.

In the religious dynamic, we observe: a slow erosion of the influence of the *ulema* since the past century, followed by a strong resurgence in the current war; a split in Sufism between the orthodox orders (nontribal zones) and the nonclerical areas (south); a decline in the influence of the *sayyad* and the charismatic leaders; a crisis in relations between the Sharia [Islamic code] and customs in tribal areas; and finally, a rise of the Islamist movement led by young intellectuals.

## A. People's Religion

One must not brutally pit the people's religiosity against the legal Islam of the ulema or the political Islam of the Islamists, if only because the latter two categories also share forms of what, for lack of a better expression, we might call "a people's religion." It is not so much a different content that we study here as it is a different mode of approach. By "people's religion," we mean the way in which religion structures daily life, the way in which it constitutes a language, actual experience, a cultural identity, but also the way in which it institutionalizes a relationship with what is sacred that is quite different from that which may be deduced from "official" theology, even though it is very difficult in Afghanistan to contrast an "official" Islam with a heterodox Islam.

By "people's," we do not mean that which is of the people as opposed to the educated (ulema) and the Islamist intellectuals, but rather, that which is derived from a horizon common to all categories and against which background one can discern the more abstract constructions characteristic of the ulema (Muslim law) and the intellectuals (Islamist ideology).

### 1. Islam in the Village

The mosque is the center of the village. Often it is the only community place, except in the towns, where one finds tea shops and where there are *khan* [family, tribal leader] who can supply guest rooms (*hujra*). The mosque is naturally the place where religious services are held. Prayers said together (*jama'a*) have greater value, like those on Friday, when the whole village gathers together at noon. But the mosque is also the meeting place of the men, a place where they may engage in discussions and exchange news. It is at the mosque that the elders assemble to discuss problems and resolve conflicts. It is also the place where outsiders passing through are lodged when there is no one rich enough in the village to house them.

Religion structures both space and time: the space of the village, which is centered around the mosque, but also the space of the world, with its concentric circles of the *umma* [community], other religions and finally, the atheists. It provides the rhythm of the day with the five prayers, the almost sacred meals; the rhythm of the year, with the feasts and holidays and the high point of Ramadan; the rhythm of the language, with the forms of address and courtesy that mention the name of God. Anyone wishing to purge his language and gestures of any reference to God would be deprived of communication.

The mullah belongs to a village and not to a clergy.<sup>1</sup> He is not the member of a constituted body and scarcely has any relations with the higher clergy (the ulema), from which he receives neither subsidies nor his investiture. It is a village consensus that institutes as mullah the man most distinguished by his piety and knowledge and who often comes from a family that traditionally provides the mullah (frequently the case in tribal zones, where the mullah almost always belongs to a professional caste).

The mullah is often poor and his "trade" is one way of supplementing the agricultural activity in which he continues to engage. There are scarcely any

productive *waqf* [church property] left in Afghanistan. The only *waqf* in the village is the mosque and its dependencies, which do not suffice to provide the mullah with a living. Either he is a kind of village employee, paid annually in kind (the case of tribal areas),<sup>2</sup> meaning that he is a religious craftsman on the same footing as the barber and the carpenter, who are also paid a lump sum by the year, or he receives the Islamic taxes (*ushr* and *zakat*) along with a remuneration for his services.<sup>3</sup> However, the people give according to their ability. There is no coercion and gifts never reach the ceiling stipulated by Islamic law. Naturally, the rich bear more of the burden for supporting the mullah, but the latter rarely depends directly on the khan for his support.

The social status of the mullah therefore varies considerably: Low in the tribal areas because of his exclusion from the tribal community and his assimilation with the scorned professional groups (except among the Durrani), it rises elsewhere based on his knowledge and his family's influence. The mullah has a monopoly over legal religious services: prayers at baptisms, circumcisions, marriages and burials, catechism for the children, directorship of the Koranic school, and so on. In the small villages, the mullah is often the only literate person. Even if he never has political power, he serves as a mediator in conflicts. He often provides parareligious, even frankly magic services: medicine, talisman, exorcism, and so on. The rivals of the mullahs are the bonesetters, the doctors and other sorcerers, but also teachers at the government schools and all the newly educated whom he scarcely impresses.

Conversation reveals a glimpse of an anticlericalism about which there must be no mistake: Anticlericalism here values the office while denying prestige to the person who holds it (in jokes, the mullah appears to be stupid, lazy and greedy), which has nothing to do with free thought.

The level of education of the mullahs varies greatly. They know how to read and write (but there are illiterate mullahs). They know by prayers and quotations from the Koran in Arabic by heart (but rarely uses the language). They also have the rudiments of Muslim law and classical literature.

## 2. Religion: System of Standards or Ethics?

Islam naturally provides a set of standards, a system to regulate human relations, in a word, social morals. But by dwelling too much on this aspect, one forgets that religion is also a form of spirituality that is part of one's behavior and that opens up a transcendence, a space for personal meditation, access to the universal immanence of the rules of community life. The Western anthropological view, but also the utilitarian reading of Islam by certain Muslim modernists<sup>4</sup> and the purely legal normalcy of certain ulema reduce Islam too much to a simple code.

As we have seen, in the idea of tradition, the peasant does not have any idea of ultraconservatism, but of conformity to an ethical model: imitation of the Prophet (*sunnat*) in one's way of life, actions and dress.<sup>5</sup> It is of little consequence then if that tradition is more imaginary than real, if innovation has in fact been constant or if the ethic is thwarted by the very person who

claims to follow it. Rhetoric about tradition in no way stands in the way of a pragmatic approach to daily life. Such rhetoric gives meaning to the world, a voice to the peasant, access to what is universal. In Islam, truth is less a matter of interpretation than of imitation. That which is a definite paralysis of political thought therefore makes it possible to maintain an individual ethic. One thus finds conformity (mere respect for rules) as well as asceticism, a set of social standards as well as an accepted or rejected space for personal meditation.

Religion therefore provides access to a universality of the word: the words of an oath, the words of shared values, words depicting a common world to interlocutors. But even if the right to speak obeys a hierarchy, even if there is a privilege of the educated, the peasant can express himself before the *qazi* [religious judge]. The references are the same and the relationship is direct, while, confronted with the government official, the peasant remains humble and confused about procedures and purposes he does not understand. He remains silent and resorts to the mediation of the *malek* [village chief]. Far from being confined in fatalism by religion, the peasant has, on the contrary, an element of comparison and analysis of his universe.

Access to what is universal, then, for through this space of transcendence opened up by religion, the peasant can speak of the world in general, of mankind (*bashariyyat*), of good and evil. Dialogue is possible with the outsider, while if Islam were but a set of standards, the other would be unthinkable and impossible, a mere transitional being between death and conversion. It is this mixture of formalism (therefore, latent sectarianism) and of profound humanism that is baffling in the Muslim peasant. Behind the distrust of the outsider, the fear of defilement and the evil eye, behind this very engaging hieratic hospitality that neutralizes as much as it accepts, behind this formalism of human relations, one finds a desire to understand and exchange, a profound humanity, more anchored in the believer than the other, for whom the lack of belief remains an avatar of the imitation of the West. In Afghanistan, atheism presumes the imitation of a Western cultural model and therefore, a form of alienation. It is not by accident if, of the two Afghan communisms, one, the Khalq, is suicidal in its destructive violence, while the other, the Parcham, is servilely pro-Soviet.

### 3. Islam: Common Law and Tribal Code

Naturally, in all Afghanistan, Islam is far from being the only system of standards. If state law (*qanun*) remains external to the rural world, customs (*riwaj*, 'adat) and superstitions, often pre-Islamic in origin, exist everywhere. Likewise, a certain number of institutions have developed without any direct tie with the Sharia (councils of elders, *mirab* [elected official who enforces water rights], and so on). Above all, rural common law, complex but precise, has been gradually constructed. But with respect to nontribal areas, the general framework of penal law and common law remains the Sharia.<sup>6</sup> Even if reference to the Sharia is sometimes purely rhetorical, no positive system has been built to confront it.



The situation is completely different in the tribal areas, where there is definitely a positive system: the tribal code (*pashtunwali*) and the institutions (*jirga*). The *pashtunwali* is both an ideology and common law<sup>7</sup> with its sanctions and institutions. Tribal power is in fact secular (that is, separate from religious power) and with respect to law itself, the tribal code and the Sharia are in clear opposition to one another. We have seen that the mullah's status is low in tribal areas. Even if his mother tongue is Pashto, he is not called Pashto himself. The son of a khan will never do religious studies (at least in the 20th century, because the situation seems to have been different at one time<sup>8</sup>). Being Pashto means being integrated into a tribal structure. And religious figures are outside the tribal system, either above it or below it. Below are the village mullahs, while above are personages possessing the *barakat* [beneficent holiness], *myan* [religious figure in tribal areas], *sayyad*, *pir* and the charismatic leaders. The mullah is therefore in the same category as the craftsman. Generally from outside the tribal group, mullah from father to son, he is a protege of the group. In strongly tribalized areas (Kunar, Paktyr), he does not participate in the *jirga* [assembly of men in Pashto tribal areas]. Elsewhere (Wardak), he serves there as a "technical adviser." If he departs from his status as one who performs religious rites, he encounters an anticlerical reaction: "Mullahs back to the mosque." Later we shall examine the status of the charismatic leaders. But whatever the case, religious personages are outside the tribal structure, which has important consequences for the political forms Islam assumes in war and for the influence of political parties in the resistance.

The tribal code and Muslim law are pitted against one another. Let us look at a few examples. According to the Sharia, adultery (*zina*) must be observed by four witnesses. For the *pashtunwali*, rumor (*peghor*) is enough, for honor is at stake (therefore, one's image) rather than morals (defined by the Sharia as that which is licit in contrast to that which is not). Women cannot inherit in the tribes because it would be in contradiction with the principle of strict patrilineality, the very basis of the tribal system, while the Koran gives women half of the share of men. The dowry, a sign of prestige, attains levels that even the Sharia condemns, while in contrast, repudiation, easy for men according to the Koran, is practically impossible in the tribes, for it would be an insult to the woman's family. Vengeance (*badal*) is a value in the tribal code, while the Sharia tries to circumscribe it. *Wish*, the traditional system of the redistribution of land, is contested by the mullahs in the name of the intangibility of land ownership (grand *jirga* of Palangali in Kunar in 1953).<sup>9</sup> One could go on and on with examples, but one can see that it is not a question of the reinterpretation of the Sharia in terms of private interests, but of two positive, explicit, opposing systems that refer to a different image of society. The *pashtunwali* is for the purpose of restoring a constantly threatened balance in the tribal group, whose identity is affirmed by consensus. The Pashto is defined in terms of those who are not. In contrast, the Sharia endeavors to dissolve specialized groups such as the tribes, *qawm* [solidarity group] and other *acabiyya* [esprit de corps] in the university of the umma.

The tribal code is both more democratic and more restrictive. It does not refer to a transcendancy, but to the consensus of the tribal community. With

respect to political life in Afghanistan, the tribal code tends to isolate the Pashto community, while the Sharia, by denying ethnic identities, has a more universalistic vocation.

The action of the *ulema* [Muslim scholar] is therefore perceived as threatening the tribal identity insofar as they want to replace the *pashtunwali* with the Sharia and exclude the *khan*, whose power is totally secular. The village mullahs often remain closer to the tribal community than the *ulema* and are careful not to intervene in these matters. The charismatic leaders are not above using the tribal code in order to assert themselves as mediators.<sup>10</sup> We shall later observe the invasion of the reference to the *jihad* [holy war] into crisis situations in tribal areas and the return of the *ulema*. Although the forms which Islam assumes in the country have nothing to do with the intensity of personal religious practices, which are very strong in tribal zones, they largely explain the differences between the north and the south in the war, differences that are neither ethnic nor religious, but that come from the different relationship which Islam maintains with political affairs in the two areas.

#### 4. Holy Men and Barakat

The *barakat* is a beneficent holiness that emanates from certain persons, certain places or certain objects.<sup>11</sup> It is an immanent power that may be transmitted and possessed. The holiness of the object: a talisman, the pages of the Koran, relics; of the place: the *zyarat*, the tomb of a *pir*; or of a person: *sayyad*, who, no matter what his personal merits, continues to possess and to transmit part of the aura of the Prophet, and *pir*, the spiritual master, a term sometimes improperly translated as "saint" (Islam does not contain the theory of Christian mediation, for the *pir* cannot sanctify by his personal intercession, but rather, by contact). The *pir* is generally associated with a Sufi order.

The tombs of the *pir* become places of pilgrimage. A guard (*muwajer*) living off the alms of the faithful maintains the *zyarat*. Pilgrimages are generally by families. Many *zyarat* "specialize" in the healing of specific diseases. Ofyan's tomb in Koh-i Daman was reputed to cure rabies.

The orthodox clergy is much more reserved about this religion of the people because more highly educated. In contrast, the village mullahs fully participate in such manifestations. And yet, there is no a priori hostility on the part of the Afghan clergy toward the *pir*.

The notion of holy men contains highly diverse categories, ranging from the vagabond *malang* [wandering mystic] to the respected *pir*, now an *alim* from a famous *madrassa* [higher religious school]. Here again, there is no clear line between the Islam of the people and learned Islam. The *malang* and *qalandar* [wandering mystic] are vagabond preachers, half insane, half naked, sellers of amulets, storytellers from elsewhere, often India. They haunt the *zyarat* and go from mosque to mosque, free on the fringes of a society not bothered by the question of their border.

The sayyad are supposed to be the descendants of Muhammad and the *khwaja* from the caliph Omar. In social life, they enjoy a kind of symbolic added value, without necessarily being religious men. They have no political role except in terms of their position in the social structure and their personal merit. Thus, in tribal areas, the sayyad is by definition above the segmentary system. Even if his mother tongue is Pashto, he is not called Pashto. His qawm is sayyad, even "Arab." This position of neutrality in relationship to the agnatic rivalries implied by the tribal structure makes him the mediator by definition.<sup>12</sup> Many sayyad have capitalized on this position to gain local political power, whence the frequent ambivalence of the people, especially the educated people, concerning them, particularly when their ignorance of religious matters is too flagrant.

The charismatic mullah is a typical figure of the turbulent, segmented tribal milieu. He emerges in times of crisis, when the ideology of the jihad transcends the tribal segmentation. The unify figure then comes from outside the tribal world: sayyrd, pir or simply mullah, the "mad mullah" of the British.<sup>13</sup>

The pir are spiritual masters surrounded by disciples (*murid*). Each region of Afghanistan has its local pir, on whose tomb a *zyarat* will be erected. A hermit, healer or simply a holy man as our rural areas call them, his prestige may be limited to his village or extend to all Afghanistan. Most of the time, they are affiliated with a Sufi order. The line between alim and pir is vague, especially in the north. Many local ulema, totally orthodox in training and theology, are revered as pir and possibly play the role of healers. In Afghanistan, the ulema have never engaged in a "pir hunt," except, naturally, when the latter claimed affiliation with perfectly heterodox forms of Islam (like the Rashani in the 16th century). With the pir, we enter the domain of the institutionalization of the *barakat*. It is no longer a matter of the people's religion, but of Sufi orders whose role in the history of Afghan Islam and the resistance is considerable.

## B. Sufism

Essentially embodied in three orders (*naqshbandiyya*, *qaderiyya*, *cheshtiyyr*), Sufism is very much alive in Afghan society and mainly affects the middle classes of the towns and urban periphery. The main Sufi centers are Kabul and Herat, but the entire northern region of the country and the region of Kandahar are greatly influenced by Sufism. While Sufism experienced a net decline in the Kabul intelligentsia, it retains fervent but discreet followers among intellectuals trained in the classical school and among the educated of the cities of old culture such as Herat. Many ulema are linked to a Sufi order.

Sufism pits exoteric revelation (*zahir*) against esoteric revelation (*batin*). In order to attain this truth, one must first have a spiritual initiation under the guidance of a master (pir or *murshid*). Every student (*murid*) must follow the path (*tariq*) in order to achieve knowledge of God, which is not discursive but intuitive. The love of God is a merger of the self in the divine infinite, with the "orthodox" schools (*tariqat-e shariati*) maintaining the alterity between the creature and the Creator (*wahdat al shuhud* and the heterodox schools affirming the singleness of the two (*wahdat al wujud*). In order to reach this stage, the murid engages in spiritual exercises whose

form varies depending on the order. These are generally continuous chanting of one of the names of God (*zikr*), either out loud (*qaderiyya*) or silently (*naqshbandiyyr*). The authentic Sufis have an intense, unostentatious spiritual life. They generally meet in small groups in a remote spot (*khanaqah*), often affiliated with a madrasa, where they practice reciting under the leadership of the *pir*. The Sufi submits to a mental discipline in daily life which, without cutting him off from social life, keeps him separate.<sup>14</sup> The bond between Persian literature and Sufism is very strong, particularly for authors greatly appreciated in Afghanistan (Ansari, Jami de Herat, Rumi de Balkh).

Nevertheless, Sufism has been established in Afghanistan as elsewhere in two highly different forms. It suffices to examine this point, for Sufism plays a great role in the Afghan resistance, although it is normally decried in the fundamentalist movements of the Arab world (particularly wahhabism).

## 1. Orthodox Sufism

Orthodox Sufism is not opposed to formal religion, but offers the believer the space of an additional spirituality, while scrupulously respecting dogma and the Sharia. The *pir* here is an *alim* as much as he is an initiator. The *murid* individually belongs to the *tariqat*, follows a spiritual initiation and pays personal allegiance to the *pir*, even if family tradition plays a great role in the decision to join. Members of the *tariqat* regularly attend *zikr* [*zeker*, litany of names of God] sessions under the leadership of the master. The follower is not cut off from his social life. On the contrary, the *tariqat* sometimes accompanies professional solidarity (corporations or *senf*) with a religious solidarity.<sup>15</sup> The brotherhood constitutes a kind of club for spiritual exercises. This form of Sufism, derived from the reforms of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah,<sup>16</sup> is therefore not totally in opposition with the more formal Islam of the *ulema*. Most of the *pir* are perfectly ordinary *ulema* and at the same time provide the exoteric (*fiqh*, *shariat*) and esoteric training. The *pir-murid* relationship is accompanied by an *alim/taleb* relationship. In order to signal their affiliation with orthodoxy, these brotherhoods are called *tariqat-e shariati*, "brotherhoods in keeping with the Sharia." Naturally, the *pir* is more than an *alim*. He is also supposed to be endowed with the *barakat*, whose succession is hereditary, and all the *murid* may constitute a veritable *qawm* whose local political influence will be considerable. We can find them in the networks underlying the establishment of resistance parties.

The orthodox brotherhoods are especially *naqshbandi*, but one also finds *cheshti* and *qaderi*. They are established in the north and recruit from among the traditionalist, cultivated bourgeoisie, craftsmen and government employees, as well as the peasantry around the great centers of culture (Herat, Kabul, Maymana, Mazar-i Sharif). There is a highly provincial base among the *Aymaq*s and in some places in the south (Kandahar, Zabul).

## 2. "Marabout" Sufism

By "maraboutism," we mean the collective allegiance of a clan or tribe to a family of "saints," supposedly endowed with a hereditary *barakat* that sanctifies the community by proxy. There is no individual membership here, much less personal practices of initiation or meditation. There is externality



between the community and the family of the saint, which alone is supposed to engage in the practice of the *zikr*, but which is generally limited to social manifestations of its *barakat* (healing of the sick, blessings). The disciples are entitled *mukhles* rather than *murid*, the former term implying a less strong relationship with the *pir*. The main act of devotion of the *mukhles* consists of an annual visit to the *pir* accompanied by gifts. In exchange, the *pir* grants protection and hospitality. It is a kind of patronage. The spiritual relationship gives way to a rather superstitious veneration. The clan or tribe is represented to the *pir* by the great families rather than by mullahs or ulema. The *pir*, in the case of maraboutism is never an *alim*. Here, Sufism is strongly tainted with anticlericalism. It is the way in which the tribes reconcile religiosity and affirmation of the tribal specificity with respect to the Sharia, which denies common law. In the tribes, Sufism is the expression of a political secularity, while in the north, it is the affirmation of a strict orthodoxy. In the tribes, it is rare for mullahs to belong to the *tariqat*.

This type of Sufism has therefore taken hold in Pashto tribal areas. The largest brotherhood is the *qaderiyya*, headed in tribal areas by the Gaylani family. As for the *naqshbandi* groups established in the same places, they may belong to two categories. In order to make a distinction between them, one has to know whether the *pir* is an *alim* or not. In the latter case, he is called *ruhani* and the brotherhood is of the marabout type. The opposition between *ruhani* and *alim* is very strong in the south (while the two words have the same meaning in the Persian of Iran) and those who are both are largely a minority, while in the north, there is no *pir* who is not also an *alim*. The nomads, very often linked with a *pir*, always belong to the marabout type, which is normal in the case of strong tribal structures. Let us point out the curious and poorly known case of "corporations" of bad boys in Kabul (*koka*) and Kandahar (*payluch*), who adopt a hierarchy and initiation rites. If they no longer have any element of Sufism, there is perhaps still some influence.<sup>17</sup>

### 3. Traveling Pir in Aymaq Country

All typecasting is obviously arbitrary and the sharp distinction between orthodox brotherhoods and marabout brotherhoods undergoes transitions. In particular, the Aymaq country (around Ghor Province) is witnessing an expanding Sufi preaching that combines traits of the two preceding categories. The *pir* are ulema and are in no way in opposition to the orthodox clergy of which they are members. But they essentially recruit from among the tribal segments. Based in Purchaman (Farah Province) and being *naqshbandi*, the *pir*, the last of which, Baha'uddin Jan, was killed under Taraki, delegated *khalifa* (representatives) to serve throughout Aymaq country, preaching to the *murid* and collecting contributions from the faithful. Membership was generally collective. Thus, the *qawm* of the *sayyad* of Khwaje-Hashtomin (Faryab) belongs to the *tariqat* in its entirety. Far from constituting opposition to orthodox Islam, these groups joined the two Islamist parties (*Jamiat* but *Hezb* also) at the time of the resistance. It would appear that the phenomenon of the traveling *pir* exists throughout the northern foothills of Hindu-Kush.

#### 4. Distribution of Sufism Based on Brotherhoods

##### a) Qaderiyya

The founder of the order, Abdul Qader Gaylani (6th century after the Hegira), has his tomb in Baghdad. His descendants, closely linked to the Ottoman regime, which gave them the title of *naqib ol-ashraf*, received there the mukhles from the different countries. In the 16th century, the order established itself in India and from there, proceeded to the Ghilzay Pashto, particularly the Suleymankeyl and Khugiani. The order has many branches led by descendants. Hazrat Naqib Saheb, father of the current Afghan pir, left Iraq in the 1920's and went to live in Chaharbagh in Nangrahar, in order to administer the local order more closely. Upon his death in 1947, his son, Sayyad Ahmad Gaylani, called Effendi Jan, succeeded him. Very quickly, the family linked itself with the royalist establishment (Ahmad Gaylani wed a Mohammedzay in 1952) and invested the income from gifts in very profane activities. Ahmad Gaylani was the Peugeot representative in Kabul. If the pir made sacrifices to external forms of religiosity (distribution of the water from his ablutions to the sick), he allowed the order to become secular and become a network of patronage. And yet, the prestige of the Gaylani family remains intact among the Ghilzay (particularly among the nomads) and the Wardaki. The Gaylani family perfectly embodies the marabout Sufism as we defined it above. But the qaderi of the north and the west, except those from the Ghilzay emigration, are not linked with the current Gaylani family and follow a more authentic religious life. They are connected with other branches (such as the *selsele* of Abdurrahman Ibn Auf in Shindand).

##### b) Naqshbandiyya

The Naqshbandiyya was founded in Bukhara by Baha'uddin Naqshband (1318-1389). It is the order most represented in Afghanistan. Several branches cohabit with one another and one clearly feels two influences here: The branches of the west and the north are linked to the cradle of the order, Central Asia (thus, the so-called "Khwaje Ahrar" branch<sup>18</sup>). On the other hand, the branches of the east and Kandahar are directly linked to the Mojaddidi family, which descends from the order's renovator, Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi.<sup>18</sup> This family, from India, went to live in Kabul at the end of the 19th century. One branch established itself in Herat, but never had the political influence of that of Kabul. In the capital, the Mojaddidi founded a madrasa and a *khanaqah* [place where Sufis practice spiritual exercises] in Shor Bazar, whence the title of the head of the family, called *hazrat-e shor bazar*. The Kabul naqshbandi follow the Mojaddidi family in the orthodox mode. In the Ghilzay tribal areas, tribes follow the marabout manner. The naqshbandi in the north and the west are of the orthodox type and do not follow the Mojaddidi family. We shall find these distributions in the resistance.

Unlike the Gaylani, the Mojaddidi have played an important political role. Since the ulema are completely orthodox, they mainly support the Pan-Islamism of King Amanullah, then opposed his reforms. Anti-imperialism and anti-modernism are the two traits of the campaign waged by the three sons of the first Hazrat de Shor Bazar (Qayum Jan Agha). They were implicated in the Khost revolt in 1924 in which a murid, Abdul Ghani, incited the Suleymankheyl

to rise up alongside Molla-i Lang. In 1928, following the Hazrat's arrest, his brother, Fazl Umar, known as Shir Agha, roused the Ghilzay tribes in behalf of Nader Khan, after supporting Bacha-ye Saqqao.<sup>20</sup> In the beginning, there would be a close alliance between the new dynasty of the Musahiban (Nader, his brothers and his son Zaher) and the family: Fazl Umar became minister of justice; the third brother, Sadeq, ambassador to Cairo. In 1936, the king gave them the property of Qala-ye Jawan. Marriage alliances linked them with the royal family through the Osman family. Relations would again become tense beginning with the Daoud ministry in 1953. The members of the family living in Egypt maintained close ties with the Muslim Brotherhood and Sebghatullah, current leader, and Harun, arrested by Nasser. Sebghatullah, returning to Kabul to teach, was in the Islamist opposition and was arrested in 1959, then went into exile in Denmark. With the death of Fazl Umar in 1956, the new pir was Mohammad Ibrahim, known as Shir Padshah. He would be executed with all the males of the family in January 1979 by Taraki. Sebghatullah Mojaddidi, who was not a pir himself, succeeded him.

One can see the contradictory movements that affect the Mojaddidi family: linked with the royalist establishment but critical over the Westernization of morals and religion; rich, but removed from capitalist-type development; occupying official posts, but figuring in the political opposition; conservative, but linked with certain innovating trends of Islam (political Islam).

And yet, as we have said, the Mojaddidi family is far from embodying the essence of the Afghan naqshbandi. Herat, Purchaman and Karukh are very active naq'hbandi centers. In these regions, the naqshbandi network is identified with that of the madrasa and the ulema. Thus, the Hazrat de Karukh, whose authority still extends from Herat to Maymana and whose generic name is Shara-fatuddin, is a *sheykh ul-islam*, therefore an alim, whose authority is imposed on others (for example, he promulgated a fatwa [legal counsel] to defend Herat against the Shiite Iranians in 1856).

### c) The Cheshtiyya

Founded by Maudud-e Cheshti (1142-1236), the brotherhood mainly exists in India. In Afghanistan, a small minority, it is concentrated in the Hari-rud Valley, near Chesht-e Sharif. The cheshtiyya now has two pir: Sayyad Nasruddin and Sayyad Gol. Ulema in the region are cheshti and peasants perceive the brotherhood as a qawm of sayyad, to which most inhabitants of the city belong. Until 1981, the brotherhood, a typical example of the *tariqat-e shariati*, managed some 20 madrasa, supplied with libraries. Here, the symbiosis between pir and alim and between murid and taleb is total. Devoting all its funds to supporting professors, buildings and students, the brotherhood lived apart from the modern world.

The brotherhoods of the north, all orthodox, are therefore mainly naqshbandi, but one finds also *qaderi*, *chishti*, *sohrawardi* and *ghausi*. They are very decentralized. The brotherhoods of the south, more of the marabout type, are qaderi or naqshbandi and follow the Gaylani and Mojaddidi families. The naqshbandi of Kabul of the orthodox type follow the Mojaddidi family. There is no Sufism among the Shiites. The distribution of the Sufis takes up the opposition between tribal and nontribal zones. We shall see these networks in the resistance.

## C. Ulema

No more than there is in the other Sunnite countries, there is no organized, hierarchical clergy in Afghanistan. And yet, there is a very clear distinction between the village mullahs and the educated clergy. This "high clergy" is defined as a body by its formation and not by virtue of its place in the political institution. Springing from medieval Islam, this body has remained as such in its studies and references until contemporary times, when it was excluded by the Westernization.

### 1. Madrasa

The alim (singular for "ulema") is called *mawlawi* in Afghanistan. The religious student (*caleb*), after leaving the village Koranic school (*maktab*), spends several years with a local *mawlawi*, who leads a dozen or so students in a regular mosque, set up as a "higher" religious school (*madrasa*), whose prestige depends on the personality of the master. Studies proceed at individual speeds and consist of learning a certain number of didactic books in a set order.<sup>21</sup> Furnished with the authorization of his master (*ijaza*), the petitioner may open his own *madrasa* or complete his studies in a more prestigious school. There has never been any major *madrasa* in Afghanistan, despite attempts of the *amir* [leaders, chiefs] to create one (ranging from the royal *madrasa* set up by Abdurrahman to the *dar ol-olum-e arabiyya* opened in Pul-i Charkhi in 1940). The Afghan ulema who were the most gifted went to India, especially to the great Deoband *madrasa*. After the 1947 partition, Peshawar became the center of advanced studies for the traditionalist ulema.<sup>22</sup> Until 1917, the northern ulema went to Boukhara, to the Diwan Begi *madrasa*.

Along with this system of private *madrasa*, the government has tried to set up a governmental system to better control the training and appointment of the ulema. In 1951, the School of Theology was set up (*fakulte-ye shariati*), with the aid of the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, followed by great *madrasa* in the larger cities. This system was integrated into the nonreligious school system. The School of Theology is part of the University of Kabul and the provincial *madrasa* follow the pattern of the lycees, whose recruitment and subject matter it follows, with the natural exception of religious courses. There would be a very clear opposition between the ulema trained in the private system -- more traditionalist and a clear majority in the Afghan clergy -- and those trained in the government system, more modern and closer to the intelligentsia. The opposition between these two systems is not a "secular-religious" opposition, for it is naturally a question for the government of monopolizing religious education, not of destroying it (the government would always try to limit the action of the ulema trained abroad). Furthermore, the private system also provides secular education (classical literature, traditional medicine, and so on). The private *madrasa* crisscross nearly the entire country, while the government system is only in the cities.

The ulema are educated men and not intellectuals.<sup>23</sup> Trained according to the age-old program common to the entire Muslim world (classical Arabic, *kalam* or theology, *tafsir* or interpretation of the Koran, *hadith* or traditions of the Prophet, *fiqh* or Muslim law), the ulema have more of a feeling of belonging to the Muslim community, the *umma*, than to a particular nation. It is a culture



of commentary and repetition, naturally, but a universalist culture. Nevertheless, it has difficulty supplying an ideology making it possible to think in a modern way. As in all Muslim countries, the ulema seemed not to be able to adapt to the modern world and leave power up to the new elites.<sup>24</sup>

## 2. Marginalization of Ulema in 20th Century

As we have already said, one finds mention of great ulema belonging to the tribal aristocracy at the end of the past century. There are no more of them. Most of the ulema are rural in origin rather than tribal (but there are as many Pashtophones as Persian-speaking ulema). Economically speaking, the partial nationalization of the waqf (religious property) by Abdurrahman at the end of the 19th century deprived the ulema of their financial autonomy for, unlike in Iran, the Afghan clergy has never been a large landowner. In the cities, the ulema generally depend on prebends and government salaries. In rural areas, they live, like the mullahs, off gifts and payments in kind made as part of the ashraf and the zakat, but the families of the lawlawi are generally wealthier than those of the simple mullahs.

Legally speaking, the increasingly explicit secularization of law and the training of legal personnel from the School of Law has deprived independent ulema of the qazi fees. Furthermore, the educational network increasingly slipped out of the hands of the lawlawi. While the small Koranic school survived, it had to meet the competition of the government elementary school where religion was also taught, but by students from the state lycees. Many young people preferred to continue their studies in lycees or even government madrasa, which guaranteed them a government job, while the graduates of the private madrasa were not recognized by the government.

The political exclusion of the ulema is more recent in Afghanistan than elsewhere. Until the beginning of the 1950's, the monarchy could not get along without their support. Allied with the tribes, it was they who brought about the fall of King Amanullah in 1929. The consensus of the tribes and enthronement by the corps of ulema were the two sources of legitimacy of the sovereign. In 1932, King Nader institutionalized the corps of the ulema in the form of the *jam'at ul ulema*, the council of the main ulema.<sup>25</sup> But the modernist turn taken by the Daoud ministry in 1953 made this last form of legitimization useless and it was replaced by the myth of the nation-state. The gap would widen between the regime and the ulema, while the tribal elites would remain close to the regime. The coalition of tribes and ulema in 1928 was ephemeral. At any rate, the ulema have never held political power.

Another form of exclusion was integration through government employment. The traditional qazi was "governmentalized" when the government did not have adequate new personnel. The clergy in the large cities received a salary. Creation of the *jama'at ul ulema* was purely symbolical. This council gave its opinion on the agreement of laws and the Sharia. More subtly, the monarchical government tried to integrate the big religious families into the vast network of patronage constituted by the royal family: marriages, embassies, gifts of land. But when this integration policy failed, the government did not hesitate to use force: the arrest of members of the Mojaddidi family at the end of the 1950's and the big sweep of the mawlawi in April 1970 at the Pul-i Khishti mosque.

Finally, there is no center to the network of the ulema. The Mojaddidi family, which headed the revolt of the clergy in 1928, has lost a great deal of its influence. There has been no place where the clerical opposition might come together, because the School of Theology is precisely in the hands of the Islamists, rather poorly looked upon by the traditionalist clergy. At the time of the 1965 elections, despite the presence of 25 mawlawi among the deputies, they constituted neither a party (theoretically banned) nor even a unified pressure group.

And yet, a certain political awakening was manifested among the city ulema when confronted with the irruption of Marxism on the political scene during the liberal period from 1963 to 1973. In December 1966, a famous fight pitted Mohammed Nabi Mohammedi against Babrak Karmal in the parliamentary chambers. In April 1970, following the publication by the newspaper PARHAM of a poem by Bareq Shafi'y using a religious blessing to celebrate the centennial of Lenin -- reserved for the Prophet in Afghanistan (*dorud bar Lenin*) -- a demonstration of Mawlawi was staged in the Pul-i Khishti mosque. It was the first coming together of the clergy and militant Islamists. Likewise, at the prompting of the Mojaddidi family, two movements of ulema were created: the Harakat-e ulema-ye mohammadi and the Khuddam ul-forghan, the first by Sebghatullah and the second by his uncle, the pir. However, at the time of the communist coup d'etat, there would be many networks of ulema, but no political organization.

### 3. Maintenance of Prestige of Ulema in Rural Areas

The exclusion of the ulema is therefore recent and incomplete. They remain active in the towns and rural areas where the government apparatus is fragmentary and above all, in the nontribal zones. They leave the local political game to the khan, which means that the importance of the ulema is generally neglected by anthropologists.<sup>26</sup> The private madrasa are maintained in places where the government educational system is weak. The ulema fall back on rural areas, where they were apparently much less solidly established before. Perhaps there has been a process of re-Islamization in rural areas as a result of the retreat to the villages of the mawlawi, who find no more jobs in the cities, the government replacing them with young people from its own circles? Whatever the case, the mawlawi are close to the rural world. The continuing prestige of the ulema has several reasons.

The alim does indeed embody a universal element, as we saw in the first chapter: the universal element of a culture and a religion in an extremely segmented country. The alim remains the sole source of political legitimacy in nontribal areas. The nation state has not taken, especially since it is mainly Pashto. The ulema also embody a historic legitimacy. They have always issued appeals for the jihad and were in the forefront of the anticolonialist fight, opposing the more realistic amir if need be,<sup>27</sup> to the point that Abdurrahman forbade the ulema from preaching the jihad.

Deprived of waqf, the ulema do not identify with the new class of big landowners and modern capitalists spring from the milieu of the secular notables. In contrast, the harm of progress (growing poverty, loss of structure and

a growing bureaucracy) echo the discourse on Islamic justice, conceived not as a revolution, but as reforms of behavior in the name of accepted standards known to everyone. Against government penetration and Marxist discourse, which also comes from the seat of power (army and teachers), the word of the alim outlines a familiar, stable and just universe that guarantees personal salvation.

#### 4. Vision of Politics of Ulema

Why did the ulema not take advantage of that confidence to create a consistent political movement? Nostalgic over a past that never existed, clinging to a narrow legality, even coupled with great private spirituality, and finally, inability to conceive of the modern world other than in terms of total externality, the alim has no truly political discourse.

The alim as such does not ask for political power. One must clarify the idea that Islam makes no distinction between the spiritual and the temporal. Islam has always accepted the existence of *de facto* power (the sultan) based on might, which develops a government apparatus (*hokumat*) endowed by right (*qanun*), with its penal sanctions (*ta'zir*), and to which one owes loyalty. There is one single condition for this power to be legitimate: It must work to defend Islam and therefore, receive the investiture of the ulema and promote the Sharia. The sultan must act in accordance with Islam, but this conformity presumes a certain externality that will be rejected by the Islamist. The educated have the duty to verify the conformity of the prince's politics (*syassat*) with the Sharia. To do so, they advise the prince (*nasihat*) and provide him with legal consultations (*fatwa*). Public order, without which there can be no public good (*maslahat*) has always seemed preferable to the ulema to the requirement of political transparency vis-a-vis religion. One can imagine all the compromises with the government which such an attitude on the part of a body with no other means of coercion than censorship or an appeal to rebellion presumes.

This conception of politics has nothing to do with the time of the first four caliphs (the *rashidun*), who were both religious and military leaders. The politics of the ulema is medieval and goes back to the times when the institutionalization of the body of ulema went hand in hand with the establishment of a secular, even quasi lay, power. When the sovereign becomes simply a factor of order and has no more original legitimacy (by virtue of his affiliation with the Prophet or his appointment by the *umma*), then, confronted with might that is becoming institutionalized, one has to create a pole of legitimacy responsible for backing it. In the final analysis, the ulema are all the more legitimate as the government is less. Except in the case of the Shiites, there is no theocratic pretension among the ulema.

In Afghanistan, the ulema have never questioned the power of the amir and have intervened very little in his appointment, which has been left up to the tribal interplay, except in 1919 and 1929. What interests the alim is civil society and not the state. His requirement is a double one: At home, the state must promulgate the Sharia and abroad, it must defend the Muslim *mellat* [nation vs state]. The alim is therefore a fundamentalist in the strict sense. He wants to return to the texts and to practice of the law. It is not a

policy; the form of power may vary. Opposition to the state starting in the 1950's comes not from the demand for power by the ulema, but from the fact that the government claims other legitimacies than Islam, thereby depriving the corps of the ulema of their function of legitimation. But even in this opposition, the ulema will have but a reactive and negative discourse. It is only among Islamic intellectuals that another conception of the state shapes up.

#### D. Shiites

The Afghan Shiites follow the duodecimain or Jaffarite branch, meaning that like most Shiites in the Muslim world, they recognize the 12 imam starting with Ali, the nephew of the Prophet and the fourth caliph. The Shiites constitute some 15 percent of the Afghan population. They include nearly all of the Hazara ethnic group, inhabiting the central region of the country but making up large urban minorities in Kabul and Ghazni. They have a dynamic diaspora in Quetta and eastern Iran. The second Shiite group is made up of the Kizilbashes, descendants of the soldiers and government employees dispatched to Afghanistan in the 18th century by Persian Shah Nader. Few in number but educated and living mainly in Kabul, they have always played an important role in the urban intelligentsia. A third group is made up of Persian-speakers in Nimruz Province, living in the Seistan marshlands and the Khashrud Plain. Called *fars*, they are barely distinguished from the nearby Iranians. One finds a Persian-speaking Shiite minority in Herat, a vestige of the time when Herat was in the Iranian subinfeudation. Finally, there are small Pashto-speaking Shiite groups: in Kandahar, Logar and the north (the Khallili). The handful of Ismaelis are challenged by the Shiites. They represent a Hazara subgroup in Kayan (near Doshi), whose chief (the sayyad of Kayan) is the leader of all Ismaelis, and all linguistic minorities of Pamir (the Tajiks of the mountains: Munjani, Shughni, Rushani, Ishkashemi, Wakhi). The Ismaelis are in general very poor, not very religious and held in suspicion by the others.

The Shiite minority has always been excluded from power, scorned and even practically outlawed until 1963. The outward forms of piety (prayers with open palms, procession of the *moharram*) were banned and Jaffarite law was not recognized by the state. The army and a political career were closed to the Shiites. Shiites in the cities engaged in economic activities and greatly profited from the development of education starting in the 1950's. Very politicized, Shiite students constituted the essential core of Maoist movements. The minority feeling and political activism are characteristics of the educated Shiites, but the Hazara peasantry remains very backward.

#### 1. Clergy and Iran's Influence

There is among Afghan Shiites a certain mimicry of Iran, which has nothing to do with the political regime in power in Iran. The same inns in Hazarajat that 10 years ago displayed the portrait of the Shah of Iran now exhibit that of Khomeyni. The Persian of the educated Shiites tends to imitate Iranian manners (use of "monsieur"; *agha* and patronyms in "I": Tawakolli, Beheshti, and so on). Among the Afghans working in Iran, the proportion of Shiites is very high.



And yet, one scarcely finds this Iranian influence in the traditional clergy, which does not have the characteristic hierarchy of Iran. The Shiite village mullah is little different from his Sunnite counterpart. On the other hand, the ulema (called *shaykh*) are trained either in Qom or Najaf in Iraq (but by Iranian professors). They return with a certificate issued by an Iranian *mojtahed* [one authorized to practice personal interpretation]. Personal relations between the Iranian clergy and the high Afghan Shiite clergy are therefore very close, but no Afghan has ever received the title of ayatollah, even if the mimicry of Iran pushes certain shaykh to use the title. However, the influence of the Iranian revolution has clearly been felt since 1978 among the young Afghan Shiites, whether working in Iran or members of the clergy. They adopt the Iranian religious practices (*taqdid*: choice of a director of conscience) and the political-religious terminology of the revolution. Tension would be great between the traditional clergy and these young people returning from Iran.

For the Hazara, the ethnic identity (*qawm*), political identity (*mellat*) and religious identity (*mazhab*) are often one. The three terms are often indifferently used (let us note that *qawm* in Hazarajat has more the meaning of ethnic group than family). This feeling of cultural identity is transformed, especially among young emigre intellectuals, into Hazara nationalism.

## 2. Shiite Religious Renewal

Until the 1950's, the Shiite community remained profoundly dormant. At the time, a movement of revivalism shook the community under the leadership of religious leaders returning from Najaf: Pir Sayyad Ismael-e Balkhi (imprisoned at the time when Daoud was prime minister and probably assassinated), Mir Ali Ahmad and Agha Mir Agha. The movement, which began with a campaign of preaching and the opening of madrasa in order to train a competent clergy, very quickly took on the form of a cultural and social, even political, claim. The mosques were transformed into cultural and social mutual aid centers (in Kabul and Kandahar) and the Shiites demanded their political emancipation. A Hazara uprising even took place around 1953 in Kezel. The entire Shiite movement would be put down by Daoud, then prime minister, who would also become the artisan of repression of Shiite demands under his administration.

In the 1960's, several Shiite madrasa were opened in the provinces and those in the cities experienced a renewal. In Hazarajat, Sayyad Beheshti opened the Takht-e Waras madrasa, which also received lycee students during school vacations. In Kabul, Wa'ez, assassinated under Taraki, headed the Madrasa Mohammadiyya and he founded a cultural association with influence among young Shiites. Arrested under Daoud, he wrote "*Khaterat-e زندان*" [Memories of Prison]. In Kandahar, there emerged the figure of the greatest Shiite religious leader now living: Shaykh Assef Mohseni, formerly a disciple of Ayatollah Khuy in Najaf. He headed the Madrasa Hosseyniyya and founded the Sobh-i Danesh ("Dawn of Knowledge") movement, whose initial purpose was purely cultural. But under the influence of his Kabul disciple, Yussuf Binesh (teacher at the Nejad Lycee and a candidate in elections), networks were set up that totally resembled those of the organization of Muslim youth. Countless Shiite splinter groups were formed, ranging from the Iranian Mojahidin-e Khalq to Maoism, and

including all the nuances of the political-religious ideology. The Shiite youth became radical behind the screen of cultural associations. It should not be forgotten that educated Shiite youth are clearly more politicized and demanding than their Sunni counterparts. We shall find these movements in the resistance (see Chapter 11).

And yet, the Herat Shiite clergy and the entire Shiite population in Nimruz, very secular, remain outside the Shiite revivalism movement.

#### NOTES

1. R. Newell, "The Politics of Afghanistan," 1972, p 26; J.-H. Grevemeyer, "Afghanistan," in "Mardomnameh," 1980, p 163; L. Dupree, "Afghanistan," 1980, p 107.
2. For an example in Kunar: A. Christensen, "The Pashtuns of Kunar," AFGHANISTAN JOURNAL, 1980, No 3, p 82.
3. M. Elphinstone, "Account of the Kingdom of Caubul," 1972, Vol. II, p 108.
4. D. Shayegan, "Qu'est-ce qu'une Revolution Religieuse?" 1982, p 144.
5. A. Ahmed, in A. Ahmed and D. Hart, "Islam in Tribal Societies," 1984, p 314 and following.
6. G. Rives, "Les Problemes Fundamentaux du Droit Rural Afghan," 1963, pp 76 and 84.
7. A. Ahmed, "Millenium and Charisma Among Pathans," 1976, p 54, and "Pukhtun Economy and Society," 1980, p 88; W. Steul, "Pashtunwali," 1981.
8. H. Kakar, "Government and Society in Afghanistan," 1979, p 36.
9. For inheritance, V. Gregorian, "The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan," 1969, p 41; A. Ahmed, Op. cit., p 295; for the dowry and divorce, Ibid., p 250; for vengeance, L. Dupree, Op. cit., p 104; on the wesh [periodic redistribution of individual land between Pashto clans], M. Elphinstone, Op. cit., Vol II, p 14 and the following.
10. For a recent case, A. Ahmed, "Order and Conflict in Muslim Society," 1982, p 318.
11. H. Einzmann, "Religioses Volksbrauchtum in Afghanistan," 1977, p 7.
12. A. Ahmed, Op. cit., 1980, p 161 and the following.
13. A. Ahmed, Op. cit., 1982, p 185; on the articulation between the charismatic mullah and tribal revolts, see the following chapter, paragraph 5.
14. The best book is A. Schimmel, "Mystical Dimensions of Islam," 1975; for our subject, see p 364 and the following.

15. P. Centlivres, "Un Bazar d'Asie Centrale," 1972, p 165 and the following.
16. See following chapter, paragraph 1.
17. These associations resemble the *futuwwa* [brotherhood of young citydwellers in medieval Islam], described by C. Cahen ("L'Islam des Origines Jusqu'à Nos Jours," 1970, p 124, and the following). It is curious to find, very much alive, a medieval tradition no longer witnessed: "In other times, the *fityan* appear to us practicing rites of initiation.... The group was placed under the invocation of an ancient patron, from whom, from affiliation to affiliation, the current master had descended" (p 126). Cahen identifies these groups of young people with the *ayyar* [bandits of honor in Persian tradition] (p 125), whose tradition remains very much alive in the memory of the Afghan people (but in rural areas, particularly in Shomali).
18. See A. Schimmel, Op. cit., p 365.
19. See following chapter.
20. L. Poullada, "Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan," 1973, pp 126 and 198.
21. P. Centlivres, Op. cit., 1972, p 60.
22. Peshawar was already a high place of learning at the beginning of the 19th century. See M. Elphinstone, Op. cit., Vol. II, p 249 and the following.
23. Concerning the difference between intellectuals and litterati, see P. and M. Centlivres, "Et Si On Parlait de l'Afghanistan," 1980, p 5.
24. On the paralysis of knowledge, stereotyped manuals, legalism and the absence of personal intellectual research as well as of any renewal of sets of problems, see L. Gardet, "Les Hommes de l'Islam," 1977, p 305.
25. See Gregorian, Op. cit., p 135.
26. A large number of studies, mainly Anglo-Saxon, flourish on the interplay of power among the khan. One scarcely finds anyone but P. and M. Centlivres (Op. cit., 1972, 1980) and R. and M. Poulton (Op. cit., Vol. III, p 64, and the following) to note the persistence of the influence of the mawlawi.
27. H. Kakar, Op. cit., 1979, p 153.

### 3. Origins of Afghan Fundamentalism and People's Movements Until 1947

Afghanistan has always been at the crossroads of three empires: the Indian subcontinent, Iran and Central Asia. While there is a tradition of popular uprisings from the Iranian Khorassan,<sup>1</sup> the religious currents that disturb Afghanistan from the 16th century to the middle of the 20th century come from India, and it is in the eastern region of the country, on the "border," that rebellions break out. Afghanistan, on the threshold of the subcontinent, has a long tradition of invasion from India. Many dynasties in northern India, including the Moguls (1526-1851), were founded by princes from Afghanistan. The cultural community is strong. Persian long remained the language of the court in Delhi. Above all, India was the main training ground of the Afghan ulema until 1947 and the place of confrontation with other religions (Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity) or with heresies (syncretism of Akbar), which stimulates Muslim reformism. The border with Iran is relatively stable except for the conflict over Herat. As for northern Afghanistan, at stake between the Uzbek khan and the Kabul amir, no people's or religious movement (both are Sunnite) shaped up until the arrival of the Bolsheviks. The sclerosis of the Boukhara regime even reached intellectual life.

The religious reform movement in India at the time presented traits that would be found again in Afghan Islam. First of all, there was fundamentalism, meaning the desire for a return to the sharia and the texts. Next comes Sufiism; the great figures of the movement would be Naqshbandi [Sufi brotherhood]. Finally, the political question played an increasingly large role, a prelude to the Islamist movement of our century: nostalgia for the caliphate; the denunciation of social injustice (especially among the Waliullah); development of the *ijtihad* [effort at personal interpretation] in order better to adapt to the modern world; and the quest for specific forms of organization starting with Sayyad Barelvi. Despite the diversity of contemporary interpretations,<sup>2</sup> one sees, from Mojaddid Alf-e Thani until Maududi, the presence of a common root whose influence on the thought of the ulema and Afghan religious intellectuals would be great.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1. Reformism on the Indian Subcontinent in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Mojaddid Alf-e Thani and Shah Waliullah

What has been called the "Naqshbandi reaction"<sup>4</sup> began with Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi Faruqi, born in India at Sirhind (1564). Both a *khalifa naq'hbandi* and an alim, he opposed the new syncretic religion (*din-e ilahi*) that the Emperor Akbar promulgated in 1582. He wanted to return to an Islam purified of all Hindu influence, while retaining a spiritual dimension so dessicated by the legal formalism that took the place of orthodoxy for the ulema of his time. This is why he became the advocate of a Sufiism rid of its Monist tendency (he criticized Ibn Arabi on this point). This juxtaposition of a fierce orthodoxy and a Sufi spirituality is a constant of Indo-Afghan revivalism, which is definitively opposed to the Wahhabite movement of Arabia, which was basically hostile to Sufiism.<sup>5</sup> The action of Shaykh Ahmad experienced a certain success under the reign of the son of Akbar (Jahangir). His writings (the epistles, *maktubat*) and his teaching formed the lasting religious revivalism of the Indian subcontinent. He received the title of Mojaddid Alf-e Thani, "renewer of the second millenium," the sign of a latent millenarium dimension. One



branch of the family (called Mojaddidi) would settle in Kabul in the 19th century.<sup>6</sup>

Shah Waliullah (1703-1762) was also an alim and a Sufi. He claimed affiliation with Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, with a more marked mystical tendency. He mainly emphasized the reopening of *ijtihad* and began to pose the problem of Islam in political and social terms. He did not recognize the religious legitimacy of the Mogul emperors and returned to the theory of the caliph, promised great success on the subcontinent.<sup>7</sup> He became the spokesman of greater social justice. In the face of the threat of the Marathes, he made an appeal for the *jihād* and asked Ahmad Shah Durrani, the Afghan sovereign, to come fight them in India; this was the great victory of Panipat in 1761. The appeal for the *jihād* would become a constant of Muslim revitalism in the region.

While Shah Waliullah scarcely mentioned the English, his son and successor, Abdul Aziz, promulgated a *fatwa* [legal consultation] declaring India *dar-ul harb*, a country with war waged between the believers and the infidels. Obedience to the English was a sin (1803). The question of resistance to the infidels became central, but it remained linked to Muslim reformism. The idea was that only the decadence of Islam permitted the victory of the infidel and that liberation therefore depended on a re-Islamization of society. Here also, one has a constant theme to be found again in Barelvi, the Deoband school, the movement of the caliphate, Maududi and the Afghan resistance. It is only in the Hindu milieus that one finds a secular-type nationalism. For most Muslim thinkers, the very idea of nationalism is secular and one sees fierce adversaries of the British oppose the concept of Pakistan equally fiercely, for it is a negation both of pan-Islamism and the general dream of proselytism in Hindu circles.

## 2. The Mojahidin Movement of Sayyad Ahmad Barelvi Among the Pashto (1826-1831)

The religious reformism waged by the Naqshbandi henceforth took on a military aspect. Sayyad Ahmad Barelvi (1786-1831), from northeastern India and a disciple of Abdul Aziz, was the first to conceive of the need for a movement that would be religious, military and political. He carefully prepared a network of fund raisers and volunteers throughout India, where he traveled to attract the faithful. He chose to fight first of all against the Sikh kingdom of Ranjit Singh, which extended toward Afghanistan (the Indus was crossed in 1823). His idea was probably to set up a Muslim bastion on the northwestern border before attacking the British.<sup>8</sup> Preaching the *jihād* to the Pashto tribes, Barelvi demanded renunciation of tribal customs in favor of the *sharia*. The *khan* were ousted in favor of the *ulema* and a system of Islamic taxation aimed at the war effort was set up. For the first time, the appeal to the *jihād* was addressed directly to the people, short-circuiting the traditional sovereigns. A "party" (*jama'at*) shaped up, with the essential purpose of propaganda among the people. It was more than mere religious preaching, for the activity of the group was based on a network of preachers, collectors of funds and judges, guided by a "preaching program" (*nizam-e da'wat*) and whose base was the village and no longer the court. The appeal for an armed uprising came only after establishment of the network. However, the campaign against the Sikhs

was a failure due to the betrayal of the local khan (Barelvi was killed by the Sikhs in 1831). Mojahidin participated in the tribal uprisings in the northwestern province until 1897 (battle of Ambala against the British).

The movement fits into the tradition of charismatic leaders heading uprisings in tribal circles (we shall come back to this) and prefigures a conception of the Afghan resistance that will be found among the Islamists and the ulema. The jihad presumes the previous Islamization of traditional society.

### 3. Deoband School

The great uprising of 1857 against British domination in India was actively supported by the survivors of the Barelvi movement and most of the ulema, but the amir of Kabul Dost Mohammed refused to intervene. The uprising was the last attempt of Indian Muslims to regain political power. There followed a period of retreat characterized by two strategies claiming to follow in the line of Shah Waliullah. The modernists, with Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan, chose loyalty vis-a-vis Great Britain and the Westernization of the Muslim community. They founded the Aligarh school. The orthodox, led by the ulema, in 1867 founded the Deoband madrasa near Delhi, headed by Nanotawi and Gangohi.<sup>9</sup> Most of the great Afghan thinkers would be educated there. The program of study, which may last 10 years, includes 106 books dealing with theology (according to the Asharite doctrine), commentary on the Koran, the Hanafite *fiqh* [Muslim law], the hadith, but also Arabic and Persian grammar, literature, Greco-Arab philosophy, medieval astronomy and geometry, so-called Greek medicine (*yunani*) and logic. In Panjshir, in 1981, there was still a Deoband alim, Mirajuddin d'Astana, who taught geometry to children from an Arabic manuscript of the Elements of Euclid. Deoband is the second university in the Muslim world after Al-Azhar.

The Deoband school rejects innovation (*bid'a*), abides by a strict orthodoxy and rejects the cult of the saints. However, Sufism is accepted and many professors are Naqshbandi or *qaderi* [Sufi order], which is enough to pit the fundamentalism of the school against that of the Saudi Wahhabites. Once again, this tie between fundamentalism and Sufism will be a constant of the orthodoxy of the ulema of the subcontinent, including Afghanistan.

Added to this fundamentalist dimension is an anti-British and pan-Islamic militancy. However, in Barelvi's line, the school's promoters believed that liberation presumes the re-Islamization of society first of all. Nevertheless, instead of basing their campaign on the people, they aimed at the clergy. Just before World War I, the Deoband ulema took clearly more political positions under the new leadership of Mahmud Al Hassan (1850-1921). They worked to defend the Ottoman caliphate against the British Empire and placed great hope in Afghanistan, one of the few independent Sunnite Muslim countries. During the first war, Al Hassan sent Obeydullah Sindhi to stir up the anti-British agitation. Already in 1908, the director of the royal madrasa of Kabul, Abdurrazzaq, once a Deoband student, tried to mount anti-British operation on the border, but was prevented from doing so by Amir Habibullah. Until 1919, he waged a campaign of agitation in the Pashto tribes on the border. Afghanistan and the northwestern province played an important role

for the Deoband ulema, who set up a chain of madrasa along the border. They still operate and since the 1947 partition, have trained most Afghan ulema. The Deoband heritage is definitely a key to Afghan Islam. It would be contested only by the laymen, Islamists and Wahhabites, who would in turn set up madrasa in the northwestern province starting in the 1950's.

Faithful to pan-Islamism, which is also a constant of the fundamentalist, then Islamist movement of the subcontinent, the ulema did not support the idea of an independent Pakistan and preferred to support the Indian Congress. The contradiction, as with Maududi later, is only outward: An independent Pakistan could only give up the expansion of Islam and retreat to a nationalism that would no longer be religious in any way, while a unified India seemed to them to be a better springboard for a return of the Muslim hegemony. Nothing better illustrates the vision they had of a proselytizing and triumphant Islam, once reformed and rid of British tutorship. From Afghanistan to Bengal, the Deoband school embodies a certain universalism beyond ethnic groups and languages. It is normal for the Afghan ulema, from a country also highly segmented, should feel more comfortable than in an ethnocentrist Arab world. But the paradox is that pan-Islamism developed on the Indian subcontinent at a time when the Ottoman Empire, its last reference, broke up under the weight of nationalisms.

#### 4. Charismatic Leaders and Tribal Movements

Of the three confederations of Pashto tribes (Durrani, Ghilzay and Pashto of the east), the first two manifested a political form of expression, ephemeral for the Ghilzay (1707-1738) and lasting for the Durrani (starting in 1747). But the tribes in the east, very attached to their customs and very autonomous, never gave birth to a political confederation. In contrast, as early as the 16th century, they were regularly inflamed by great millenarian movements led by charismatic religious leaders. All failed, but the contemporary struggles are rooted in the memory of past jihad. One must in fact distinguish tribal warfare from the jihad. The former implies relatively few segments and scarcely goes beyond the level of the tribe. It is part-time and is motivated by vengeance or the fight for a material possession. It is not very damaging, even quite symbolic, with the combat itself being but the prelude to an inevitable mediation. It is a war between peers and if there are any heroes, there is no charismatic leader. The jihad, on the contrary, implies a coalition of tribes around a leader driven by religious reasons. Even if the tactics and attitudes (looting) are similar, one fights an irreducibly other enemy (the infidel, whether heretic, Sikh, British or communist). The charismatic leader is nearly always outside of the Pashto tribal milieu. He refers neither to tribalism or even to the Pashto community, but to the umma of Muslims. The unifying figure can only come from outside the tribal world. The segmented nature of the tribal milieu is thus negated from below, for the leader embodies a zero degree of ethnicity, and from above, for he refers to that which transcends all differences between Muslims (a hadith says: "No genealogy in Islam," and therefore, no tribalism).

Religious uprisings present similar characteristics for 400 years: the same leaders and the same content of the preaching. Bayazid Ansari, founder of the Roshaniyya sect (1525-1585?), was an Ormuri from Kaniguram (Waziristan),

a small minority that still survives. He and his descendants roused the Afridi, Orakzay, Mohmand, Bashgash and Khallil tribes for nearly a century.<sup>11</sup> Mullah Darwaza, his adversary, who roused the Youssofzay in the name of the orthodoxy, is a Tajik,<sup>12</sup> a disciple of Sayyed Ali Shah of Termez (also a non-Pashto) whom the tribes revered under the name of Pir Baba. Sayyad Ahmad Shah Barelvi, whom we have seen before and who stirred the tribes in 1826, was a Hindustani. Akhund de Swat<sup>13</sup> was probably a Gujar, at any rate, not a Youssofzay, his chosen tribe. Shami Pir, who roused the Suleymankheyl and the Waziri in 1939, was, as his name indicates, from Syria. The Mojaddidi family is from India and the Gaylani from Iraq. Finally, let us recall that all the sayyad are by definition perceived as outside the tribal structure, even viewed as Arabs, even if their language is Pashto and if they have taken women from Pashto backgrounds for generations. Whatever the case, even if there are charismatic leaders that are neither sayyad nor of different ethnic groups, none can be a khan. By definition, a khan can only help and extend his following. He will never be above the clans. The rule still holds true. It is also the nature of the current war (a jihad rather than a tribal war) that explains the absence of khan at the head of the mojahidin.

The charismatic leader unites the tribes for the jihad by religious and reforming preaching: putting an end to abuses by returning to the sharia. The Roshani are the only example in which the rhetoric is heretical (Bayazid accepts metempsychosis and denies that Muhammad is the seal of the prophecy). But in the other cases, it is a question of fundamentalism that we have already seen at work among the Afghan or Indian ulema. The leader is a Sufi who demands a return to the sharia. The tribes are brought together to restore the "real Islam," either against the infidels, or against a sovereign assumed to become a *kafir* (like Amanullah in 1928). He is Hadda Mollah of Nangrahar, hostile both to the British and to Amir Abdurrahman, influential among the Shinwari and the Mohmand (1880-1900), who is also a pir (his caliphs are the pir of Tagao and Sayyad Hazrat Shah, ancestor of the Majruh family). It is Mushk-i Alam (calling himself a sayyad from India, but married to a Ghilzay Andar), rallying an ephemeral tribal coalition to futilely fight with the British for Kabul (1879), Molla-i Lang, rousing the Mangal against Amanullah (1924) and finally, the Hazrat of Shor Bazar (a Mojaddidi), making his appeal for the holy war against King Amanullah in 1928.

What is the relationship between the tribal structure and the religious movement, since such charismatic leaders appear only in a tribal milieu? For most Western authors, the jihad is but an ideological dressing for tribal warfare.<sup>14</sup> And yet, we have seen that the forms of war are different, even if the attitude of the warrior at the time of combat (and more particularly, with regard to the booty won or coveted) is the same. Much more, the jihad always implies a shift in power relations, going from the khan to the religious leaders. The type of an insurrection waged by a charismatic leader is that of Sayyad Ahmad Barelvi,<sup>15</sup> but one will find him at the siege of Kabul by Molla-i Lang and in many feats of the Afghan resistance. The legitimacy of the new leader being religious, he tries to fight against tribal customs in order to impose the sharia, the professional qazi and a new system of taxation.<sup>17</sup> As long as the movement is on the rise, the khan fade into the background, but as soon as there is a possibility of victory, the warriors begin to worry about the distribution of the booty and the new hierarchical relationships that



feats of arms will create among them. Rather than to yield to an equal, they prefer to play their personal game, which is generally enough to break up the army that had been rallied. The khan then appeal to tribal solidarity against the encroachment of the religious leaders and sabotage the jihad in order to restore the traditional tribal game. It is not a matter of a betrayal. For a khan, what counts is the prestige vis-a-vis his peers and not victory over an outside enemy. The tribal game goes on behind closed doors and is reversible. The tribal war space is internal to the tribal world; the jihad space external. It is better to make a pact with an enemy that recognizes your local priority than to win the jihad at the risk of losing one's identity. This is what the British have understood, ensuring their power by the strengthening of tribalism. This is the policy followed by the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Naturally, the distinction between tribal warfare and the jihad is not always easy to trace, because even if there is the presence of a charismatic religious leader, the conflict can be experienced as tribal by the soldiers if it remains on the local level,<sup>19</sup> especially if the motivations of the warrior differ from those of the leader. While there is opposition at the top between the tribal structure, on the one hand, based on the pashtunwali and the overlapping of clienteles (*mlatar*) of the malek and the khan, and the jihad, on the other, presuming the substitution of the sharia for the tribal code and the emergence of nontribal religious leaders, then things are not so simple with respect to the warrior, who refers to both systems at the same time. His personal faith is extremely strong and Islam is definitely the only universal he has, but tribalism is his daily code. It is the outside context of threat that makes Islam the profound motivation, with the changes in reference that that presumes, but tribalism returns in his relations with other Pashto, and this tension between the two poles is a constant of the Afghan resistance.

## 5. Political Pan-Islamism

The reference to umma, the Muslim community, plays a great role in Afghanistan. It is a constant theme of the people's uprisings and the preaching of the ulema, as well as of the charismatic mullahs. But until the beginning of the 20th century, pan-Islamism was not a political doctrine. It was an ideological reference that accompanied a reaction to an infidel intrusion against the Muslim community, that a moving frontier separated from the Hindu and British world. For the ulema, pan-Islamism is a timeless, transcendent fact of Islam that is not linked to political contingencies. The first to think of pan-Islamism in political terms were the Afghan sovereigns. For them, up to and including Amanullah, pan-Islamism was a means of legitimizing the emerging state and a factor of foreign policy making it possible to increase the role of Afghanistan in the region, while carefully avoiding being dragged into a destabilization policy of British India or Soviet Turkestan. With the arrival of Nader Khan in 1929, pan-Islamism disappeared from state rhetoric and subsisted only among the ulema.

The sovereigns were sure of finding a popular response by referring to Muslim solidarity. They presented themselves as the protectors of Islam and gave a religious connotation to their wars of conquest (fighting Shiite heresy or the Zoroastrians, at the time of the invasion of Persia in 1709, fighting the Mahratta in 1761). The last Afghan sovereign to respond to an appeal of

the Muslims of India against the infidels, the Sikhs in this case, was Shah Zaman in 1795.<sup>20</sup> But the pan-Islamic reference was but a means to solidify the state, the sole purpose of the sovereigns. Therefore, every time that the pan-Islamic fever endangered the Afghan state, the sovereigns chose caution against the pressures of the ulema in favor of intervention. Dost Mohammad refused to support the great Indian uprising of 1857, when the Muslims played a preponderant role. Abdurrahman opposed the charismatic mullahs who wanted to pit the border tribes against the British. Habibullah refused to fight alongside Turkey in World War I and yielded to English pressure to prevent the agitators from rousing the border tribes. Finally, Amanullah, the most sensitive to the pan-Islamist themes, was careful not to aid the basmachi after 1923 and discouraged the Khilafat movement in India (see below). He thus prevented the ulema trained abroad -- therefore in Deoband -- from teaching in Afghanistan.

The history of contemporary Afghanistan has experienced a series of ephemeral moments in which ulema and ruling circles united on a pan-Islamic theme, followed by long periods in which the Islamic opposition reproached sovereigns for making pacts with infidels. This ranges from the excommunication fatwa pronounced in 1881 by the ulema of Kandahar against Abdurrahman<sup>21</sup> to the demonstrations of the young Islamists in 1972 against the support given by Kabul to India against Pakistan.

The great period of political pan-Islamism extends from the Balkan war in 1911 to the abolition of the caliphate by Ataturk in 1924. It was the only time when pan-Islamism was able to represent a political strategy enabling Afghanistan to play a regional role. The call for the defense of the Muslim world came from the Indian Muslims. The appeal would be taken up by the Afghan ulema, but also by the modernist movement of young Afghans, whose mentor was Mahmud Tarzi, disciple of Jamaluddin Afghani and founder of the newspaper SERAJ-UL AKHBAR (1911-1919), opening the progressive and liberal movement.<sup>22</sup> The assassination of King Habibullah in 1919, following his refusal to support Turkey against England, marks the triumph of this coalition.<sup>23</sup> The new king, Amanullah, unilaterally proclaimed the real independence of Afghanistan. He went to war against the British. It was a military failure but a political victory (1919). Amanullah was acclaimed by the clergy, the people and the modernists. He signed a friendship treaty with the USSR, one of whose clauses stipulated the independence of Boukhara and Khiva, which incidentally was enough to make any future allusion to the treaty invalid (February 1921). He also signed a treaty with Turkey (1 March 1921), which Afghanistan recognized as holder of the caliphate.<sup>24</sup> Amanullah's prestige then reached its zenith, both in Afghanistan and India, where a curious pan-Islamist movement would occur: the Khilafat.

The Khilafat movement was founded in India in 1919 by the brothers Mohanmad Ali and Shaukat Ali, led by Abdul Kalam Azad, who was also a Naqshbandi by origin.<sup>25</sup> The leaders of the movement were linked with Deoband as well as Aligarh. The movement worked for recognition of the Ottoman caliph as caliph of all Muslims and preached the hejrat (exodus) of Muslims under foreign domination to Muslim countries that had remained independent. Amanullah openly supported the movement, until thousands of Indian Muslims decided to settle in Afghanistan. This exodus of people who had sold all their property

culminated in August 1920. It was a human tragedy to which Amanullah was forced to put an end. The abolition of the sultanate by the National Assembly of Turkey (November 1922), thus signifying the refusal to recognize any temporal power of the caliph, followed by the outright abolition of the caliphate in March 1924, reduced the *raison d'être* of the Khilafat to nothingness and it disappeared.

At the same time, King Amanullah began his policy of modernizing Afghan society,<sup>26</sup> which gained him the support of the clergy. It was the end of the alliance, in the name of pan-Islamism, of the tribes, the clergy and the modernist establishment. The basic disagreement had to do with the relationship between the defense of Islam and Westernization. For the fundamentalist ulema, the defense of Islam depended upon the re-Islamization of society, therefore, a return to the sharia. For Amanullah, the defense of Islam was an anti-imperialist political theme and depended upon Westernization. One is therefore not talking about the same Islam. The ulema identified Islam with religion and therefore, with the sharia. The modernists, in contrast, saw in Islam a culture in a Third Worldist perspective. The Japanese victory over Russia in 1905 was seen as a victory of exploited Asia over the West, thanks to Westernization.<sup>27</sup> For the ulema, any Westernization was in itself a defeat and could not be a means of opposing the West.

Here one finds an ambiguity that will be seen throughout the history of the Muslim world: Is Islam a culture or a religion? Perfectly atheistic Muslims, such as Sultan Galiev in the USSR and even Hafizullah Amin in Afghanistan, would defend the specificity of the "Asian" revolutions against the Muslim clergy.<sup>28</sup> Lenin saw in pan-Islamism an anti-imperialist movement, as shown by the appeal of the Council of the People's Commissars to Muslims of Russia and the Orient (24 November 1917), while pan-Islamism for the Soviets would a few years later become a reactionary ideology. All of Soviet historiography concerning people's movements bears the mark of this ambiguity. Since the Afghan people's movements are all in the name of Islam, the problem for Soviet authors is to know at whom they are aimed: If they are aimed at the British, they are progressive, but if they are aimed at reforms, they are reactionary. But the problem is that they are generally aimed at both, whence the variations in the evaluation of Afghan reformist sovereigns by the Soviets.<sup>29</sup>

There is neither any radical opposition or any systematic convergence of people's movements formed in the name of Islam and state policies aimed at ensuring the independence of the Afghan nation state. The values at stake are different. As we shall see, one cannot even say that the people's revolts are systematically "reactionary" or even "traditionalist." What one has is a different conception of politics, as illustrated by the revolt of Bacha-ye Saqqao, the most caricatured people's movement of Afghan history, among royalists as well as Marxists.

## 6. The Fundamentalist Revolt of Bacha-ye Saqqao

If one excepts the resistance of the Hazaras and the Nuristanis to Abdurrahman's troops, the only non-tribal people's movements come from Shamali, the

stretching from north of Kabul to Salang and prolonged by Kohestan and Panjshir. The majority of the population is Persian-speaking, but the south from Istalif to Kabul and Koh-i Safi are Pashto. The two populations are totally overlapping and intermarriages frequent. The Shamali has always opposed the Durrani dynasty, not because it is Pashto, but because it is tribal. There is no tribal organization in Shamali. It is a rich agricultural region where small landowners dominate. The prestige of the religious leaders is very great. Nearly all the ulema are Naqshbandi and the local pir have thousands of murid. The most famous is the pir of Tagao, whose last representative died in 1981, after fleeing the Taraki regime.

The people of Shamali played a role in the second Anglo-Afghan war of 1879-1880. Mir Majedi and his brother Mir Darwesh, two Naqshbandi ulema, rallied the troops led by Mir Bacha Khan which were harassing the English billets, while a tribal lashkar led by Mushk-i Alam attacked south of Kabul. Shamali then remained calm until 1928, despite a few tax revolts led by honorary bandits sometimes linked with the Sufis, such as the bandit Imamuddin in 1906-1907, supported by a fakir.<sup>30</sup>

Shamali is a bastion of fundamentalism as we have defined it: a movement of return to the sharia led by generally Naqshbandi ulema. However, one extremely important trait distinguishes these movements from those of the tribal areas: The leaders of the nontribal zones are not charismatic; they are of local origin and related to families of important personages, whose influence is nevertheless not as great as in tribal areas. The opposition between secular power structures and clerical structures is less important than among the tribes, which explains why there is less need for a charismatic leader. Even if there are naturally local customs and a tendency on the part of the khan to set up an economic power little concerned about conforming to the sharia, the tension between two models of behavior (lay and religious) is not as great as in the tribal areas, whence a less paroxystic aspect of the religious movements, which are also more continuous in time.

The uprising of the basmachi against the Soviet regime had a definite response in Shamali and Panjshir, one of whose alim, a Deoband graduate, Mawlawi Abdul Hayy, joined Enver Pashah in 1920. Likewise, it was a Safi from Tagao that Amanullah sent as a representative to the basmachi in 1919.<sup>31</sup> Finally, the basmachi leader who emigrated to Afghanistan, Ibrahim Beg, would support Bacha-ye Saqqao at the beginning of 1929.<sup>32</sup>

Bacha-ye Saqqao, "son of the water-bearer," was the son of a soldier in the second Anglo-Afghan war. From the village of Kalakan, he was an active bandit of honor in Shamali. When the Shinwari of Nangrahar rose up against Amanullah in November 1928, Bacha-ye Saqqao plunged into the attack on Kabul, which he took on 16 January 1929. He was crowned king under the name of Habibullah by the pir of Tagao.<sup>33</sup> We shall not dwell on the events. What is of interest to us is the significance of the happening. For most Afghan and Western historians,<sup>34</sup> the Bacha-ye Saqqao affair constitutes an incongruous interlude that upsets the traditional political scene. And yet, for us, the episode represents the emergence as an event of an underlying structure: the fundamentalist network. One does not take Kabul by accident, even during a period of anarchy. Furthermore, it is clear that Bacha-ye Saqqao enjoyed



not only the moral support of the ulema of the north, but also their active support in the form of preaching,<sup>35</sup> particularly in Naqshbandi milieus. He was the candidate of the fundamentalist coalition who sapped Amanullah's power, while the revolt of the Shinwari was not directly inspired by religious circles. There was no charismatic leader rousing the tribes at that time and the tribal movement would be taken over by the Durrani aristocracy, in the person of Nader Khan. The takeover of Kabul against Bacha-ye Saqqao in October 1929 was not a jihad, but the recovery of political power by a tribal confederation, no longer limited to the Durrani, but extending to all Pashto. The proof is that the mode of legitimization chosen by Nader Khan after the taking of the capital was that of the grand jirga and not the council of the ulema.

Hamidullah Khan Akhundzade, the pir of Tagao who crowned Bacha-ye Saqqao, was the son of the successor designated by Hadda Mollah, Mir Sayyad Jan Padshah, who crowned Nasrullah in 1919. It is said that Bacha-ye Saqqao was himself a murid of Shamul Haq Mojaddidi Kohestani, pir of Gulbahar.<sup>36</sup> His entry into Kabul was initially approved by the Mojaddidi family of Shor Bazar, which had first wanted to crown Inayatullah, candidate of the clergy against Amanullah in 1920. Whatever the case, the fundamentalist ulema were searching for a sovereign who would restore the sharia and who would do away with the modernist reforms of Amanullah. The people's support of Bacha was founded on the same themes: mainly a cultural rather than a political or economic revolt.

What was the reason for Bacha's failure? Two elements were decisive: the tribal reaction and the rallying of the Mojaddidi family to the aristocracy. If the religious and cultural theme played a role in the uprising of the tribes, with Amanullah gone, they returned to a traditional struggle for power that lost any aspect of a jihad. The tribes considered the presence of a Tajik on the throne as a usurpation and then rallied the first tribal leader who emerged. There could be no question of imposing the hegemony of the sharia. On the contrary, the pashtunwali was solemnly confirmed. After supporting Bacha-ye Saqqao, the Mojaddidi family, worried about anarchy and much more linked to the establishment than the ulema and the provincial pir, also rallied Nader Khan, an evolution which explains the ambiguous role which the family would later play in the resistance.

The people of Shamali would retain a positive memory of Bacha, whom they call Habibullah, and his shadow would loom over the resistance to the communists. These are the same networks that would structure the resistance in 1979 and 1980, with the Islamist intellectuals added. The continuity is even greater than it would appear. The few important personages who rallied to Bacha would be found -- they or their descendants -- in the Jamiat-i islami and not in the parties of the establishment (Khallili family). The high places of the Bacha revolt would be the high places of the Hezb or the Jamiat, with one exception: The village of Kalakan, from which he springs, would be a bastion of Maoism. The surviving ulema and pir would play a role in the establishment of the first Islamist networks in 1960, which explains why Shamali, with Laghman, is the only place where the ulema joined the Hezb-i islami of Hekmatyar. Let us mention mawlawi Abdul Ghani of Qala-ye Boland. Educated at Deoband and a *khalifa* (representative) of the pir of

Tagao, he was the soul of the revolt of Bacha-ye Saqqao and embodied the passage from fundamentalism to Islamism, belonging to the founding core of the Islamist movement in the 1950's: The village of Qala-ye Boland is a bastion of the Hezb-i islami of Hekmatyar. He and the mawlawi of Qala-ye Gholam Shah have trained generations of local ulema, the former specializing in philosophy, Sufiism and general culture; the latter in the fiqh. The son of Abdul Ghani, Mawlana Iblagh, studied at Al-Azhar, another symbol of transition between two generations of ulema. Finally, while the last pir of Tagao, Mian Gul Jan, was apparently not a member of the Islamist movement, one of his sons joined the Hezb, of which Tagao is still a bastion. It is definitely the tradition of Bacha-ye Saqqao that lives again in 1979, provided that one perceive behind the bandit of honor the fundamentalist tradition, whose heritage would be bent in a more progressive direction by the young Islamist intellectuals.<sup>37</sup>

## 7. From Fundamentalism to Islamism

In a work<sup>38</sup> devoted to the revivalist movements, Islamist Maududi analyzes their failure. He sees three causes: first of all, an excessive attachment to Sufiism, and we know that the young Afghan Islamists, while they are not opposed to Sufiism, adhere to it less than their elders do. Second, there is the absence of a true political organization, and we shall see that the theory of the party would be one of the main contributions of Islamism to revivalism. Finally, the need to assume, not only modern techniques, but modernity itself. The Islamist movement would emerge in the modern sectors of society. It is definitely based on a political critique of the people's movements that preceded it that the Islamist movement would be built.

## NOTES

1. It is the tradition of the ayyar (bandits of honor) that writer Khallilullah Khallili evokes in connection with the revolt of Bacha-ye Saqqao ("Ayyar-e Korassan," *Jamiat-e islami*, 1983). See also Note 18 of Chapter 2.
2. For the Soviets, Shah Waliullah is sometimes a feudal thinker, sometimes an enlightened bourgeois (see the report on the book by Gordon Polonskaya and the critique by Y. Payevskaya, quoted in *CENTRAL ASIAN REVIEW*, Vol. 13, No 2 [text illegible] For S. A. Maududi, Shah Waliullah is a precursor of the Islamism of the 20th century ("A Short History of the Revivalist Movement in Islam," 1981, p 82 and the following). See also E. Mortimer, "Faith and Power," 1982, pp 64-68, and A. Ahmad, "Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment," 1970, p 201 and the following, who see him rather as a modernist. The expression of Ahmad (p 211), "reformist orthodox revival," suits us.
3. The best book on the subject is by Aziz Ahmad, quoted above. The relationship between Mojaddid Alf-e Thani, Shah Waliullah, Barelvi and Maududi is explicit and claimed by each one of them. See S. A. Maududi, *Op. cit.*

4. Ibid., p 182 and the following.
5. This movement is nevertheless labeled as Wahhabite by the British as well as the Muslim authors (Q. Ahmad, "The Wahabi Movement in India," 1979). It is the term "Wahhabite," used pejoratively, that targeted all mentalist "agitators" returning from Mecca when Wahhabism was at its height at the beginning of the 19th century. However, Sayyad Barelvi, like the Algerian Al Sanussi, founder of the order that bears his name, remains closely linked with the Sufi orders condemned by the Wahhabites, despite the influence exercised by the latter. Nothing even proves that there is a direct link between these two fundamentalists and the Wahhabites. For a good critique of the Sanussi-Wahhabism assimilation, see E. Evans-Pritchard, "The Sanussi of Cyrenaica," 1949, pp 6-11, which contains a clear analogy with Afghan fundamentalist Sufism.
6. See the preceding chapter.
7. For a presentation of the theory of the caliphate in the Sunnite world, see H. Laoust, "Schiisms in Islam," 1977, p 430 and the following. For the position of Waliullah, see A. Ahmad, Op. cit., p 206.
8. See, among others, H. Maleek, "Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan," 1980, Chapter 6.
9. See A. Ahmad, "Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan," 1967, p 104 and the following, and G. Minault, "The Khilafat Movement," 1982, p 25 and the following.
10. L. Adamec, 1975, "Who's Who of Afghanistan," p 107; see also Chapter 8 of H. Maleek, Op. cit., 1980.
11. See O. Caroe, "The Pathans," 1973, Chapter 13, and p 226 and the following. See also: M. Elphinstone, Op. cit., 1972, I, p 274 and the following; M. G. Ghobar, "Afghanistan Dar Masir-e Tarikh," 1980, p 313 and the following; G. Vercellin, "Afghanistan 1973-1978," 1979, p 70; H. Kakar, Op. cit., 1979, p xix; Aslanov, "Afghanistan: the Past and the Present," Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1981, p 32 and the following. We shall not discuss here the very particular and scarcely pertinent interpretation that makes the Roshani movement the first example of the national liberation struggle of the Afghan people (confused with the Pashto of the east, precisely the only ones never to have established institutional relations with the Afghan state). It would appear that the heretical nature of the Roshani movement attracted Marxistic thinkers, who seek to found an Afghan nation-state outside the religious reference. Emphasis on the use of the Pashto people's language by the Roshani has no meaning because their fundamentalist adversaries (Mollah Derwaza) used it just as much.
12. O. Caroe, Op. cit., 1973, p 199.
13. A. Ahmed, 1976, p 93. This book, "Millenium and Charisma Among Pathans," is the best study of the case of the charismatic mullah in Pashto tribes.

14. The clearest expression is in L. Poullada, *Op. cit.*, 1973, p 152, concerning the uprising against Amanullah: "(...) the rebellion was primarily political in nature and was merely an aggravated recurrence of tribal separatism." One finds the same idea in L. Depree and Barth (criticized in A. Ahmed, *Op. cit.*, p 14 and the following).
15. See H. Maleek, *Op. cit.*, p 170 and the following.
16. One will see in the war of resistance groups united in a party suddenly refusing any tactical cooperation for fear that a rival group on the tribal level may take advantage of it to seize the weapons of the adversary.
17. The sharia is also opposed to the tribal code by Akhunc de Swat (A. Ahmed, *Op. cit.*, p 97). In Kunar, a jirga of Salarzay and Mamund meeting when called by the mullahs in Palangati in 1953 forced renunciation of the wesh [periodic distribution of individual land among Pashto clans] deemed contrary to the sharia (oral source). Let us note that at the time of the Rif war, Abd el-Krim also tried to substitute the sharia for custom: "Abd el-Krim and the Rif War," pp 89 and 114; J.-P. Charnay, "Technique and Geosociology," 1984, p 24.
18. A. Ahmed shows a Mohmand malek supporting the British in order to ensure his local power (A. Ahmed, "Pukhtun Economy and Society," 1980, p 189). He also concludes that the British always supported the malek against charismatic religious leaders (*Ibid.*, p 70). Another example of the refusal of the khan to make war on the British: A. Ahmed, "Millenium..." 1976, p 109.
19. A study of a contemporary case in which the two elements overlap is A. Ahmed, "Order and Conflict in Muslim Society," *MIDDLE EAST JOURNAL*, No 2, 1982.
20. O. Caroe, *Op. cit.*, p 264.
21. On the tense relations of Abdurrahman and the ulema concerning the question of relations with the English, see H. Kakar, *Op. cit.*, 1979, p 153 and the following.
22. On the alliance between conservative ulema, modernists and members of the Afghan establishment on pan-Islamism and support for Turkey, see V. Gregorian, *Op. cit.*, 1969, pp 213-223, and 234 to 239.
23. This coalition will rapidly divide on the matter of choice of the successor. The fundamentalists choose Nasrullah, brother of Habibullah. He is crowned by Mir Sayyad Jan Padshah, successor of Hadda Mollah; while the modernists and the tribal aristocracy support Amanullah. At the death of Nasrullah, it is Inayatullah, brother of Amanullah, who is the candidate of the fundamentalists. His maternal grandfather is the khan of the Safi of Tagao, where the Naqshbandi influence is very strong, while the maternal grandfather of Amanullah is a Barakzay (therefore,



a member of the Durrani aristocracy). One can see the complexity and importance of the networks in Afghan political life (see Chapter 9).

24. Ibid., p 234.
25. See G. Minault, *Op. cit.*, p 38. To my knowledge, it is the only overall book on the Khilafat movement.
26. The best book on the reforms of Amanullah, although written from the standpoint of the court, is by L. Poullada.
27. V. Gregorian, *Op. cit.*, 1969, p 208.
28. See A. Bennigsen and E. Wimbush, "Muslim National Communism in the Soviet Union," 1980.
29. I. Reissner, Soviet specialist on Afghanistan, written in 1929 ("Die Lehren der Bauernbewegung in Afghanistan," 1929), an article in which he describes the movement of Bacha-ye Saqqao as peasant, revolutionary and antifeudal, while the revolt of the tribes is presented as reactionary. In 1954, the same Reissner describes Bacha-ye Saqqao as a reactionary instrument of English imperialism (quoted in *CENTRAL ASIAN REVIEW*, Vol. IV, No 2, 1956, No 23, p 198).
30. Source: seminar "Lokale Tradition und Staatliche Reformpolitik in Mittelasien," headed by Holzwarth, summer of 1982; report in *Bibliotheca Afghanica*.
31. Ghulam Mohammad Safi, of the in-laws of Inayatullah, brother of Amanullah. Later named commanding officer of the Safi regiment based in Mazar-i Sharif, he would revolt in favor of Inayatullah, supporting Bacha-ye Saqqao (*L. Adamec, Op. cit.*, 1975, p 148).
32. Ibid., p 164.
33. Jakel, "Reform und Reaktion in Afghanistan," 1977, while L. Poullada writes that he proclaimed himself (*Op. cit.*, 1973, p 178).
34. M. G. Ghoobar, *Op. cit.*, 1980, and L. Poullada, *Op. cit.*, 1973, among others, and V. Gregorian, *Op. cit.*, 1969, more explicit, and the book by R. T. Stewart, "Fire in Afghanistan," 1973, is thrilling.
35. V. Gregorian, *Op. cit.*, p 276, Jakel, *Op. cit.*, 1977.
36. Jakel, *Ibid.*
37. It is interesting to see that the historian Ghoobar, cantor of progressivism who would make Bacha the very figure of obscurantism and reactionaries, would not be disavowed by the Islamists in his general vision of the march toward the "Light," even if they disagree on the nature of Bacha's revolt. It is another sign of the complexity of the relationship between modernism and tradition, in which there are not two distinct camps.
38. S. A. Maududi, "A Short History..." 1981, p 108 and the following.

#### 4. Islamist Movement Until 1978

The Islamist phenomenon in Afghanistan is recent and is more related to the influence of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhoods than to Indian fundamentalism (despite the importance of Maududi). While taking up the heritage of the fundamentalist trend, it marks a clear break with Afghan cultural tradition. The Islamists are intellectuals, the product of modernist enclaves in traditional society. They come from what we have called the "state bourgeoisie": a government academic system whose only outlet is a place in the government machinery. Except for the group of "professors" at the School of Theology, they do not consider themselves educated (ulema), but as intellectuals (*roshanfekr*).

The Islamists nearly always come from the government educational system: either scientific schools or state madrasa. There are very few literary figures among them. On the campuses, they frequent the communists more, to whom they are violently opposed, than the ulema, with whom their relations are ambiguous. The references are the same as for the ulema (Koran, sunna, and so on), but Islamist thought is formed by the encounter with the great Western ideologies, in which they see the secret of the technical progress of the West. The problem for them is drafting a modern political ideology based on Islam, the only way to assume modernity and better confront foreign imperialisms.

The Islamists will play a decisive role in the Afghan resistance.

##### A. Political History of the Islamist Movement

###### 1. Origins

The Islamist movement appeared in 1958 in the circles of religious intellectuals, under the aegis of Dr Gholam Mohammad Niazi, future dean of the School of Religious Sciences (or School of Theology), upon his return from Egypt. This first group would be called the "professors" (*ustaz*). Trained in the government schools and not in private madrasa, they complete their studies not in Pakistan, but at the great Al-Azhar University in Cairo, where they meet the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhoods. They subsequently teach at the School of Theology in Kabul. In the beginning, they were more a vague group than a party. In addition to the professors, such as Niazi, Rabbani and Tawana, one finds intellectuals such as Sebghatullah Mojaddidi and Minhajuddin Gahiz, who in 1968 founded the newspaper GAHIZ. The year 1958 would see strong opposition between religious circles and the government (led by Mohammad Daoud, cousin to the king). Arrests were numerous (such as that of Sebghatullah Mojaddidi) and the movement therefore remained semi-clandestine. It was entitled Jamiat-i Islami (Islamic Society, but it is also called Tehrik-e Islami or Nehzat-e Islami) and mainly devoted itself to cultural work among the students: the translation of works by foreign Islamists (Sayyed Qotb, Maududi), modernization of terminology and teaching methods in the religious field, the presentation of Islam as a modern ideology. It was also a matter of comparing the new ideologies disseminated in intellectual circles: Feuerbach is in the university library.

There is no organic tie with similar movements in other countries; at most, a network of personal relations (however, a cousin of Mojaddidi, Harun, would be imprisoned in Cairo by Nasser, as a Muslim brother). Two Egyptian professors teach at the School of Theology (Jamal Amar and Abdul Al Ahmad Atwar), followed by an Indian Muslim supporting Maududi (Al Nadawi). It is clear that the Afghan Islamists are nevertheless more turned toward Egypt than Pakistan, although Gahiz (assassinated in 1972) tries to institute institutional ties with the Pakistani Jama'at, the party founded by Maududi (of which the future amir, Qazi Husseyn Ahmad, a Pashto, often comes to Kabul). Sebghatullah Mojaddidi, because of the hostility of the most radical Islamists, is not a member of the movement, but is part of the delegation to the Islamic conference in Tripoli in 1973, with Gholam Rabbani Atesh, a member of the Islamic youth groups. Unlike the Jama'at of Pakistan, an elitist party operating as a kind of Opus Dei, the Afghan Islamists wanted to build a mass movement.

It would appear that the first translations of Sayyed Qotb were published around 1960, by Mawlawi Khaled, under the title "Islam wa edalat-e edjtemay" ("Islam and Social Justice"), in a translation by Reshad and Sittar, published by Tarbia Afkar. Then Rabbani, in Egypt from 1966 to 1968, undertook the translation of "In the Shadow of the Koran," which would remain incomplete, and "Footprints" ("Signes de Piste").

## 2. Muslim Youth

The professors had great influence on their students and in 1965, the year of the founding of the Communist Party, the Islamist students demonstrated openly with the distribution of a tract (entitled "Shabname-ye jihad," "The Tract of the Holy War"). The period from 1965 to 1972 was one of political turmoil on the Kabul campus, which had never had so many students. The agitation was encouraged by the liberalism of the regime and the noisy debates of Parliament. The student branch, called Sazman-e jawanan-e mosalman, Organization of Muslim Youth, would be the most militant part of the movement. Western observers perceive the movement as conservative,<sup>1</sup> while it has a revolutionary and reformist aspect. Incidentally, the preference of European progressives for a conservative but secular establishment in the face of religious dissent is a constant.<sup>2</sup> The students demonstrated against Zionism at the time of the Six Day War, against American policy in Vietnam and the privileges of the establishment. They were violently opposed to traditional officials, the king and especially, his cousin Daoud, with whom the fight would be bloody. They rejected Pashto nationalism and denounced the claim of a Pashtonistan as well as the partition of Pakistan in 1972.<sup>3</sup> They protested foreign influence in Afghanistan, both Soviet and Western, and against speculators at the time of the 1972 famine, demanding curbs on wealth.<sup>4</sup> But they were very anticommunist and the Kabul campuses were sprinkled with bloody fights with the Maoists. Starting far behind the communists, the influence of the Islamists spread and they would win the majority in the student elections of 1970.

The Islamists recruit from among the government academic network, following three main sources: either in the schools of science (Polytechnical School with Massoud and engineer Habiburrahman; the engineering school, with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Ishaq, Nurullah Emmat), or in the government madrasa

(the "professors," but also: Sayyaf, Mawlawi Habiburrahman, Abdurrahman Niazi, Tareq), or in the teacher training schools (Zabiullah de Mazar, Sayfuddin Nasratyar, Sayfurrahman de Ghorband). On the geographical level, their bastions are the west, around Herat (with recruiting essentially from the government madrasa, therefore more moderate), and the east (Baghlan, Takhar, Mazar, Panjshir, Ghorband, Laghman, Kunar and Nangrahar), with recruiting mainly among the educated persons from the nonreligious government system. Recruiting in tribal areas is nil. We shall see the networks more in detail in the chapter on the establishment of parties.

### 3. Distrust of the Ulema

The problem of relations with the traditionalist ulema emerged immediately. The movement of young students was rather hostile to the mullahs and the ulema, deemed conservative. The professors, on the other hand, remained very concerned about retaining their contact with the clergy. On the whole, there would be no collaboration before the 1978 coup. However, in the provinces of Nangrahar, Kunar and Laghman, a certain number of local ulema would join the movement: Mawlawi Khales from Nangrahar, Mawlawi Mujiburrahman (pseudonym) in Pech, Mawlawi Halim of Istakhrej (north of Istalif), as well as most of the mawlawi of Nuristan (Gholam Rabbani, Afzal, Abdurrezzaq of Pashal, and so on). The madrasa Najmulmadares de Hadda, near Djellabad, is also an Islamist stronghold. Right in Kabul, the Jamal Mina mawlawi (the student "parish") is Islamist, along with Mawlawi Fayzani, who opened a library in Pul-i Khishti. It is said of the latter that he began to set up a network in the army (he would be executed by Daoud in 1975). These ties are explained by two reasons: First of all, the Mashriqi ulema (meaning the three provinces east of Kabul) have a solid tradition of fundamentalism and anti-imperialism. The mullah of Hadda, Najmuddin, was at the end of the 19th century a decisive figure in the fight against the British and of the opposition to the monarchy. Many mawlawi in the region led tribal uprisings against the infidels. The Nuristani mullahs have kept the militant tradition of a "country with a mission" (Nuristan was converted to Islam only at the end of the last century). The fundamentalism of the ulema of Mashriqi was always more radical and antitraditionalist than in other regions. Movements inspired by Wahhabism, like the Panjpir movement (from the name of a Pakistani village) shook the region beginning in 1950. A Sayyed Mollah led the Shinwari of Kunar to Wahhabism and to the Hezb-i Islami. But except for these local mawlawi, who would often go over to the Hezb-i Islami, and therefore to the most sectarian faction of the movement, most of the Afghan ulema, hostile to the government madrasa and worried about the radicalism of the young Muslims, remained on the outside, despite an initial politicization after the government's repression of the demonstration of anti-Parcham traditionalist mullahs in Pul-i Khishti in April 1970.

The influence of the Deoband school is strong among the Naqshbandi pir region of Kabul and a certain number, such as the pir of Tagao, that of Qala-ye Boland and Hafezji Sahed of Kapisa are close to the very same Islamist movement which their sons often join. Tagao and Qala-ye Boland are high places of the Islamist movement.



#### 4. Political Structure and Activities

The movement operated around two circles: one open, that of the Muslim youth; the other much more secret, around the professors. A council (shura) topped the whole and elected an amir. It was Gholam Niazi until 1972; then Rabbani. In 1972, the year in which the statutes were rewritten, the council was made up as follows: a president (Rabbani), an assistant (Sayyaf), a secretary (engineer Habiburrahman, replaced by Hekmatyar in 1975), also head of military affairs, a head of cultural affairs (Tawana), the ulema (Mawlawi Habiburrahman), and peasants. Small cells of five members were set up in pyramid fashion (five cells make a *hawze*, district, , and five districts a province, *wilayat*). Meetings are held in private apartments. Until 1972, emphasis was placed on the advancement of members and not on any power takeover. But the threat of a communist coup incited the leaders (particularly Rabbani) to undertake penetration of the army.

The School of Theology published the journal MAJALLE-JE SHARIAT, the "Muslim Law Review," of which Rabbani served as editor and which would be the mainstay of the Islamists in intellectual circles.

The student movement is theoretically subordinate to the shura, but acts in the open. The four leaders of the youth movement (Abdurrahim Niazi, Habiburrahman, Mawlawi Habiburrahman, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the only survivor after 1975), would be better known than the members of the underground organization. Until 1970, the movement remained on campus. Its activity consisted in fights to build mosques there, political preaching and fights with communists. Around 1970, the movement sought to leave the campus ghetto. The young Islamists launched a movement of political and religious preaching throughout the country, including the Dawat o Tanzim branch (Preaching and Organization), the spearhead. In the cities, the student preachers spoke in district mosques, short-circuiting a small urban clergy poorly trained and pro-government (the mullahs of Kabul are paid). In the country, they took advantage of their vacation to preach in their native villages. The young Islamist teachers minded remaining in the bled less than their communist colleagues. They tried to introduce reforms into daily life, using the language of the rationalization of Islam characteristic of reformers of the past century such as Jamaluddin Afghani (for example, ablutions are presented more as an act of hygiene than of piety, which makes it possible to get a health policy passed). A case is described to us by ethnologists:<sup>5</sup> In the village of Ri-Jang, Balkh Province, Mawlawi Alam, a young School of Theology student and therefore a student of Rabbani, set up around the mosque a seed cooperative for poor peasants. It is a typical example of the social progressivism of the Islamists, more reformist and concrete than that of the communists.

The peasants, except for the mullahs, generally accept these young intellectuals, but do not perceive the political dimensions of their action. The 1975 uprising would not be understood, although the surviving Islamists would be naturally carried to the head of the resistance after 1980.

In Kabul, the Muslim youth, called "Ikhwan" ("Brothers") by their adversaries, would have a more dissenting attitude. Student leaders came out into the open on the occasion of the demonstrations, but the professors remained in the shadows. If it is clear that there are definitely two factions in the movement: radicals and moderates, who opposed one another in 1976, there was so far more a distribution of tasks than divergence.

The young Shiites, especially Kizilbash, were also politicized under the leadership of spiritual leaders such as Wa'ez in Kabul and Mohseni in Kandahar. They formed underground Islamist organizations very separate from the Sunnites.

#### 5. Daoud's Coup and the Abortive Uprising of 1975

By 1970, the Islamists worriedly observed the penetration of the government machinery by the communists, whom they knew better than the foreign observers. In 1972, the decision was made to set up Islamist cells in the army. Habiburrahman was given the task and he then recruited the future Major Massud as his deputy in this task (after the death of Habiburrahman, Hekmatyar would briefly hold the responsibility). But it was too late.

The coup d'etat of Prince Mohammed Daoud on 17 July 1973 came about with the support of the Parcham faction of the PDPA. From every standpoint, Daoud was violently opposed to the Islamists: He was a Pashto nationalist, a layman, relying on the communists. The Parchami held the Ministry of Interior (Faiz Mohammad) and proceeded to arrest Islamist militants. Niazi and Rabbani tried one last approach to Daoud, proposing their support in exchange for a break with the communists. It was a failure and the main leaders of the movement fled abroad, except for Niazi.

The movement was then split into two factions that would be at the root of the future split between the Jamiat-i islami and the Hezb-i islami. The young people wanted a general people's uprising, but Rabbani thought that the people were not ripe and preferred to patiently organize the infiltration of the army in order to plan a counter coup. The radicals, with Hekmatyar, won out. It would also appear that the Pakistani president, Bhutto, was pushing for immediate action in order to counter the pro-Pashto policy of Daoud. He therefore supported Hekmatyar.<sup>6</sup> The Islamists, meeting in Peshawar, were trained by the Pakistani Army and carried out underground missions in Afghanistan. The uprising was planned by region: Massoud would handle Panjshir, Mawlawi Habiburrahman Laghman, Dr Omar Badakhshan, Nasratyar Herat and Hekmatyar Paktya.

Armed groups tried to rally the population starting in July 1975. The most violent fighting took place in Panjshir (with Massud and Ishaq), Laghman (Mawlawi Habiburrahman), Kabul (Abdul Haqq), Badakhshan (Omar and Ismael Pasokh, an Ismaeli from Shughnan), Ghorband (Issa, Sayfuddin), Nejrao (engineer Habiburrahman). Actually, only the northeast experienced the beginning of an uprising. The rest did not move. In Herat, Nasratyar was arrested upon his arrival. In Paktya, where Hekmatyar was found, nothing happened. The people did not follow the movement. Young activists were arrested or barely escaped prison. Coordination was poor. The army did

nothing. Militants sometimes plunged into suicidal attacks on police stations. The repression was brutal: Hundreds of young people and dozens of ulema disappeared and were often summarily executed. Pr Niazi was murdered in prison, as was Mawlawi Fayzani. Two hundred militants, including Nasratiyar, remained in prison without trial and were executed in June 1979.

Western observers hear only about the Panjshir revolt, which they attribute to Setam-e melli.<sup>7</sup>

The lessons of the insurrection are clear. The uprising affected only regions in which the most radical militants were settled (northeast) and that would be the bastions of the resistance to the Soviets. Cities and tribal areas did not move, nor did the west. There was no military uprising. The Islamist political movement is not perceived by the population as a bulwark of Islam, just as the Daoud regime is not perceived as procommunist. Above all, the movement is absolutely not familiar with the practices of guerrilla warfare and being underground. Militants are easily arrested and believe in the myth of the leftist guerrillas dominating the 1960's: the Guevarist theme of the *fuoco*, meaning the artificial implantation of a group of guerrilla intellectuals in a peasant population that is supposed to rise up and follow them.

The failure and repression would constitute a very heavy handicap for which Afghan resistance continues to pay today. The hundreds of intellectuals who disappeared are cruelly needed by a resistance that has no leaders, especially since of all the intellectuals, only the Islamists returned to the country after 1979. And yet, lessons were learned by the survivors: no uprising without a tie to the ulema, even with traditional officials; no uprising without close contact with the peasantry; the need to coordinate the peasant uprising with an urban and military uprising. This is the conclusion of Rabbani, which would materialize in the Herat uprising of March 1979. Radicals such as Hekmatyar, on the other hand, who expected more of the 1975 uprising, would generally be more cautious confronted with the communists in 1978 and 1979, out of fear of experiencing such a crushing defeat. It was the Soviet intervention that would truly launch them into war.

## 6. Exile in Peshawar and the Split

The surviving militants fled to Peshawar after the failure of the uprising. They were authorized by Bhutto to open offices. At that time, the Islamists therefore enjoyed support from the Pakistani left (Bhutto's People's Party), the army and the Jama'at-e islami, as well as from certain Saudi funds the first year. Pakistani support for Afghan Islamists is not so much ideological as it is strategic: Afghan Islamists oppose Kabul's claim to Pashtunistan, out of rejection of a nationalist ideology and challenge the traditional Kabul-New Delhi axis in the name of Muslim solidarity. They are consequently the best defenders of the integrity of Pakistan.

The exiled Islamists would nevertheless have a difficult life. They lack funds, because Saudi Arabia and Iran, which would embark upon a policy of Daoud's recovery, do not aid them. Pakistan does not want an open confrontation with Kabul. Finally, the dissension broke out into the open.

The movement was polarized around two leaders: Borhanuddin Rabbani and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. The former would bring along the moderate, especially Persian-speaking elements; the latter the radicals, especially the Pashto. Rabbani, born around 1940 to a family of small landowners in Yaftal (Badakhshan), devout Sufis, completed the studies of a modernist alim: government madrasa, then studies in Ankara and Cairo. He graduated from Al-Azhar. Back in Kabul, he became a professor at the School of Theology. His studies and publications deal with three directions. In literature, he wrote a thesis on the mystical poet Jami de Herat. In theology, he published a refutation of the Motazilites, that is, the rationalist philosophers. Finally, he began a translation of the political thinker Sayyed Qotz ("In the Shadow of the Koran," "Footprints"). He is at the crossroads of three thought trends that characterize the Jamiat-i islami: classical culture, spiritualist (even mystical) orthodoxy and political Islamism. Such a combination is rare in the Muslim world. Rabbani's personal prestige is great in the government madrasa, the Sufi brotherhoods of the west, literary circles and the Persian-speaking Islamist intellectuals.

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is a Pashto from the Kharrut tribe, from Baghlan and therefore belongs to the Pashto communities displaced to northern Afghanistan. A student of engineering, he would not have time to complete his university education. His entire career would be on the Kabul campus. Radical, charismatic and shrewd, he would exercise great influence over the students, heading most of the demonstrations of the 1965-1972 period. But lacking classical training and very hostile to the traditional clergy, he would not inspire confidence in the ulema. His phraseology remained "leftist" and he would willingly adopt the vocabulary of the Iranian revolution. Consequently, his influence would be over former students, mainly Pashto-speaking, over the Pashto communities of the north and the few mawlawi of the east who supported the Islamist movement.

The causes of the split are double. On the one hand, it occurred based on the cleavages we have pointed out and that would remain a constant: circles of the government madrasa, brotherhoods in the west and Persian-speaking Islamists for Rabbani, radical and mainly Pashto students for Hekmatyar. In addition, it corresponds to a split that runs throughout the whole Islamist nebula of the Muslim world and that seems to us to be centered on the question of the *takfir* (literally, "the fact of declaring a Muslim a heretic"). Historically speaking, this concept has its origin in Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328). For him, it was a question of authorizing the jihad against the Mongols, even if they converted to Islam.<sup>8</sup> A good Muslim is therefore not defined by his religious attitude, but by his political conduct. One can declare someone a heretic based on purely political criteria (position of Sadat's murderers). Rabbani rejects this interpretation, following in this the traditionalist ulema. The Hezb-i islami of Hekmatyar condemns his political opponents, thus giving priority to the Islamic revolution over the fight against the communists and the Soviets (attitude joining that of revolutionary Iran), while Rabbani seeks the broadest possible union of all Muslims, whatever their political choices.

Actually, these are two totally different conceptions of political action that are opposed to one another. Hekmatyar follows a quasi Leninist theory



of the avant-garde party, which is homogeneous and disciplined. Rabbani, since the creation of the Jamiat, has reasoned in terms of fronts and regrouping. In particular, he understood that one cannot become established in tribal areas through a simple party structure and that one has to adapt to tribal institutions. He emphasizes the need to win over the liberal intellectual circles. He also opposes the elitist conception of the Pakistani Jama'at, which refuses to become a mass movement. What Rabbani took from the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhoods is definitely this conception of the mass movement, which is foreign to the revivalism of the Indian subcontinent.

The split took place around 1976-1977 under obscure circumstances. Hekmatyar then created the Hezb-i islami, the "Islamic Party," and the choice of the term "party," taken from the communists, is not neutral. It is the whole theory of the militant and enlightened avant-garde that is taken up again. The other movements must submit or disappear. However, Rabbani's continued use of the term *jamiat* (society) expresses the desire to rally that drives him.

A second split would affect the Hezb-i islami in 1979. Mawlawi Yunus Khales split from Hekmatyar, while keeping the name Hezb-i islami. This split occurred over the same rejection of radicalism, but based on a regional split. It affected the Pashto of Nangrahar and Paktya (the latter following Jallaluddin Haqani). Rabbani and Khales, who have excellent personal relations, share the same conception of political Islam.

It was in this situation of retreat and weakening that the communist coup d'etat found the Islamists in April 1978. It was the repression of the Islamist movement by Daoud that opened the way to the communists. Opposite them that year, except for the discredited Daoud regime, was nothing. Daoud dug his own tomb.

## B. The Islamist Ideology

The term "Islamic ideology" (*ideolozhi*) appears frequently in the writings of Afghan Islamist intellectuals. However, the latter are neither the first nor the last to call for a return to Islam. The fundamentalist ulema do the same. Furthermore, ulema and Islamists have the same frame of reference: the Koran, sunnat, sharia, and so on. Since Islam implies an overall representation of society, one cannot at first see what this notion of Islamic ideology adds. Naturally, the Islamists respond that so far, there has existed no truly Islamic society, with the exception of the time of the Prophet and the first four caliphs. But since there have existed societies in which the role of the sharia was preponderant, this means that the Islamists use the term "Islamic society" to designate something different from what has existed so far.

### 1. Political Space

The Islamists have integrated Western thought even in order to reject it, while the ulema simply ignore that thought outright. Islamism is first of all the feeling of the need to introduce modern conceptual categories.<sup>9</sup> The use of Western concepts (sovereignty, state, democracy, revolution...) will

change the intellectual configuration that serves to think upon the problems of society. Even if it is in order to challenge the main political concepts of the West, out of a rejection of the mimicry that has too often marked a certain form of Muslim reformism of the past century, the reference to these concepts creates a new political space peopled with what are actually traditional references. The contribution of Western thought is not in the concepts but in the very notion of a political space and autonomy: actually, a set of state problems. The originality of Islamist thought comes from a double gap: the borrowing of a space drained of its concepts from the West and the borrowing of an out-of-synch terminology from the ulema. It is much more than a mere cultural mimicry of the West and it remains to be seen whether the program has been fulfilled.

The Islamists do not start from the Islam of daily life and therefore, of an Islam perceived as culture, but from political reflection. For many of them, it is through politics and not belief that they come to religion. The ulema have a definition of politics based on the relationship of law: The state is that which guarantees the legal relationship between Muslims. It is Muslims, or more precisely, the community of Muslims, who constitute the basis of political reflection. Politics is an extension of the legal. For Islamists, it is the nature of the state that defines the nature of society. Whence the distinction, questionable for an alim, between the Muslim state and the Islamic state: "...the objective (of Muslims) must be the establishment, not of a Muslim national state, but of an Islamic state" (Maududi).<sup>10</sup>

One must therefore draft a theory of the Islamic state because as Maududi emphasizes, the traditional thought of the ulema discerns no autonomous category of the political, for it mixes problems of ethics, law and politics.<sup>11</sup> The word "ideology" therefore serves to qualify this different approach to the problem of the state, no longer in legal terms, as for the ulema, but in political terms. A political problem will be handled by the ulema by seeking an analogy in the Koran or the sunna. The Islamist will start from abstract concepts: What is society, what is power, what is nature? These questions for us would be derived from the political problems of the 18th century. Once the definitions have been set, the Islamist will corroborate them with verses from the Koran. Many Islamist manuals begin with a course of political philosophy and only in a second phase take up the strictly religious aspect.<sup>12</sup>

## 2. Theological Questions Implied by Islamism

One constant demand, on the theological level, of the reformists of the 19th century reformists as well as of modern Islamists is the rejection of *taqlid* (imitation) and the reopening of *ijtihad* (effort of personal interpretation).<sup>13</sup> And yet, tradition did not ignore the need to respond to new situations. The Hanafite school has four sources of law: the Koran, the sunna, *qyas* (reasoning by analogy based on a known case) and *ijma* (consensus of doctors of law). The problem is that only the ulema are authorized to deal with *qyas* and *ijma*. In the case of the appointment of the amir, who must theoretically be chosen by the consensus of believers, the ulema generally claim to be the interpreters of the consensus. From the orthodox standpoint, Islamist intellectuals, generally not being ulema, are excluded from the *ahl ar-ray*

(decision-making people), with respect to ideological as well as political questions.

Two paths are therefore open to Islamists in order to accede to decisions: either extending the *ijma* to the entire community of believers, which would legitimate universal suffrage, or being recognized as intellectuals as part of the doctors of law,<sup>14</sup> while eventually leaving the monopoly over the *fiqh* up to the *ulema*. Whatever the case, there is a determination among Islamists to make the Koran prevail on other sources of law because its generality makes it possible to transcend the complex construction of casuistic and scholastic tradition that justifies the existence of a corps of technicians such as that of the *ulema*. The Islamists look to the Koran for a sense rather than a system and their theological opening is also a means of integrating modernity against a tradition that seems to them to be more medieval than Muhammadan.

### 3. The Theme of the Party and the Islamic Revolution

This assumption of Western concepts through a rereading of origins enables Islamists to borrow the political form (Leninist) that has been so successful for liberation movements, whatever their relationship with Marxism: the theory of the party and the myth of revolution. One finds in Islamists the theory of the avant-garde, centralized, relatively well-disciplined party whose members are bound by a common ideology, strengthened by a certain background. It is in this sense that the three Islamist parties of the resistance (the two *Hezb* and the *Jamiat*) are real political parties and therefore, also relatively effective war machines, while the three nationalist parties will in fact be clubs of notables and traditionalist *ulema*. The party is definitely a modern concept that is not thinkable in the intellectual universe of the *ulema*, which knows only the community of believers and the corps of the educated.

One last theme is that of the revolution (*engalab*). It fits into the millenarist tradition of the people's religion in which the establishment of an Islamic state brings justice and happiness<sup>15</sup>: The Islamists are definitely revolutionaries anxious for social justice, more than the *ulema*, who have a more wait-and-see vision (the important thing is to act in keeping with the law). The *aim* expects justice from respect for the law by the individual; the Islamist from the redefinition of social relationships based on politics and therefore the state. However, the revolution is but one form of return to timeless justice and not a phase in a historic process of becoming.

### 4. Question of the Program

The program of the Islamists has always remained vague and has exhibited a clear evolution between the time of being underground and the period of the resistance, in the sense of a moderation and a rapprochement with the positions of the *ulema*. Let us look at the main lines of the current program:<sup>16</sup> Sovereignty belongs only to God. The *amir* is but a vicar and the only legitimacy is religious. The mode of appointing the *amir* is the consensus of the community, expressed concretely by election. The elective principle is moreover very widespread in the resistance, on the local level or within the

parties. The powers of the amir are considerable, but he is aided by a shura or council. The corps of ulema retains its autonomy with respect to the government and can censure or invalidate an amir. Civil society is administered by the ulema following the sharia. Equality of rights of all Muslims is affirmed. Private property and profit are recognized, but corrective mechanisms must prevent too great of a social differentiation: a ban on loans with interest, taxes on income and capital, responsibility for the poor and the sick through compulsory alms. The right to education of women is recognized, but mingling condemned.

The leader is not all-powerful (unlike for the Shiites, influenced by the mystic of the hidden imam), even if it is a system that favors the emergence of a leader. The state of law is maintained thanks to the autonomy of the corps of ulema, the revocability of the amir and the elective system. This very general program can, through the constancy of its reference to Islam, rally a majority of the Afghans, but it scarcely indicates the precise form that the regime of a liberated Afghanistan would take.

One must not neglect the incantatory side of these political references. More than a precise program, the Islamist ideology is a reference that enables one to find one's position with respect to tradition and modernism, to set oneself apart from the ulema while working out a common platform with them. Finally, it is a certain way of continuing the dialogue with the West, while using a horizon and set of problems that began there. The West (whether liberal or Marxist) tries to attribute to the archaic what is feudal, medieval and the obscurantism that are in fact derived from modernism. The traditionalist alim is much more reassuring than the young Islamist intellectual trained in our schools. And yet, he is our double.

We have seen that Islamist political thought was in fact aimed at giving some consistency to this political scene whose gap between the reality of the game of the qawm and the reference to a Muslim universalism lacking any precise political form we described in the first chapter. It is a virtual state to which Islamist thought refers. We shall see how the political institutions set up by the Islamists, to wit, the parties, are also attacked and diverted as was the central state, but to a lesser extent, because the Islamist intellectuals are less subjected to the interplay of the qawm than the state apparatus or even the Communist Party. The fact is that to the extent that the Islamist parties have become mass parties, one again finds the interplay of the qawm, at least on the local level. At the top, it is rather the influence of the political conceptions of the ulema that plays a negative role. Thus, the conciliating tendency of Rabbani, which makes him accept flawed compromises with Sayyaf or Hekmatyar and which is violently criticized by his captains, can be better explained by its alim legalism than by political calculations. As soon as the most dubious personage is recognized as a Muslim, then one must do everything possible to get along with him. Certain unnatural alliances, such as the current fundamentalist alliance, are shored up by the rhetoric of the ulema, not only Afghan, but Saudi and Pakistani as well, who go only by professions of faith and not political behavior. The Leninist and unanimist rhetoric of the ulema results in the fact that the problems of the resistance are not posed in political terms and all Machiavellianisms and ratios of strength function without being referred to.



## NOTES

1. L. Dupree, "Afghanistan," 1980, p 605; R. Tapper, "The Conflict of Tribe and State," 1983, p 41; F. Halliday, "War and Revolution in Afghanistan," 1980, p 47; and many others have written on the subject (see BIA newspapers).
2. Frenchwoman Andree Viollis, member of the Popular Front, endlessly praises the new king of Afghanistan, Nader, who won out over both the Shamali peasants and reformer King Amanullah. A. Viollis, "Torment Over Afghanistan," 1930.
3. Speech by Habiburrahman at the 25 February 1972 demonstration, *Afsha-ye desayes-e este'mar dar mantege* (Revelations of Imperialist Plots in the Region), pub. by Jamiat-e islami, Tehran, no date.
4. Communique of the Muslim Youth, in KARAWAN, Kabul, 19 May 1973.
5. R. and M. Poulton, "Ri-Jang: A Tajik Village in Northern Afghanistan," Vol. III, pp 64, 317 and the following, EHESS thesis, Paris, 1979.
6. It would appear that a certain number of movements of opposition to the Afghan regime (Islamist but separatist also) were then encouraged by the Pakistani in order to counter Kabul's subversion in Pashto zones (particularly of Hazara autonomist movements such as the Tanzim).
7. Rouinsard and Souldard, "The First Steps of Socialism in Afghanistan," in LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE, January 1979; G. Vercellin, "Afghanistan 1973-1978," 1979, p 60.
8. E. Sivan, "Ibn Taymiyya: Father of the Islamic Revolution," ENCOUNTER, May 1980.
9. S. A. Maududi, "Islamic Law and Constitution," 1980, p 207.
10. K. Bahadur, "The Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan," 1978, p 45.
11. S. A. Maududi, Op. cit., 206.
12. See, for example, a little manual of political philosophy written by Massud's deputy in Panjshir, Abdul Hayy Panjshiri, *Islam, mektab-e 'etedal* (Islam, School of the Happy Medium), which begins with a paragraph on the Hegelian dialectic.
13. E. Rosenthal, "Studia Semitica, Islamic Themes," 1971, p 74; Bahadur, Op. cit., 1978, p 207.
14. CRESM, "The Muslim Maghreb in 1979," 1981, p 230, in which M. Tozy studies the problem in Morocco.
15. Significantly, one of the rare allusions of an Islamist to the Gospel in the text has to do with the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth. Quoting Mathew (6:10): "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," S. A. Maududi emphasizes the "as," S. A. Maududi, Op. cit., 1980, p 177.

16. One finds references to a political program sprinkled throughout the publications of the Hezb-i Islami and the Jamiat. For an approach to the Islamist political theories of the Muslim world in general, see Fleury in CRESM, "Islam and Politics in the Maghreb," 1981, p 183.

## 5. Communist Reforms and Repression (1978-1979)

We shall not return to the communist coup d'etat, which is outside the scope of our study.<sup>1</sup> But after studying the historical background of the Afghan resistance, we shall specifically analyze popular uprisings and the establishment of the resistance. The first cause of the uprisings was the authoritarian institution of reforms by the new regime a few months after the coup d'etat of 27 April 1978.

### 1. Ideological Framework of Reforms

The agrarian reform, literacy training and the strengthening of the state apparatus are the three main guidelines of the Khalq policies. The communist leaders have always been aware of bringing about a revolution by proxy, in place of an unlikely working class and confronting a passive peasantry. Obsessed by the precedent of Amanullah, they believe that one must strike quickly and hard before the "counterrevolution" raises its head. Three means are used: repression through a devoted and well-equipped army, the agrarian reform which, they think, will win over the masses, and literacy training, which will make it possible to tear the people away from the influence of the clergy and spread the new ideology.

The Khalqi are both ideologists and activists. The mistakes of the regime are found in "Khalqi thought": superficial knowledge of Marxism, a total lack of any analysis of the specific situation, but also a profound conviction of inventing a new path to socialism peculiar to Third World countries and without any intermediate stage. This then is recurrent throughout the history of Eastern revolutionary movements, from Sultan Galiev to Pol-Pot.<sup>2</sup> Let us quote certain statements by Amin: "We are fighting to uproot feudalism so as to move directly from a feudal society to a society exempt from the exploitation of man by man."<sup>3</sup> "Our Khalqi state is the best and the first example of a proletarian state of this type."<sup>4</sup> (Such an ambition must not have thrilled the Soviets.) Quoting Taraki, Amin continues: "Our great revolutionary leader (...) did not think that one should await the growth of an autonomous people's movement headed by the party. On the contrary, he thought that the party should attract the active and practical support of the people." Let us conclude with one last quote that shows the pedagogical determination of the Khalqi: "Our great leader has discovered that in developing nations, because the working class has not yet developed its strength, there is another force that can overthrow the oppressive feudal government, and that force was the army in Afghanistan. He therefore decisively ordered that the workers' ideology be spread among the army...." (KABUL TIMES, 19 April 1979). Let us not forget that Amin had a diploma in education and that the Teachers Training School was a Khalqi stronghold. However, in this perspective, the machine gun quickly replaces the ruler on the hands and any peasant who does not understand the teacher's lesson is a dangerous counterrevolutionary.

For the Khalqi, Afghan society is feudal. This therefore means that the peasantry is made up of a mass of peasants (*dehqan*) exploited by a handful of feudal lords (the *khan*) with the complicity of the clergy. The peasants are alienated by religion and do not see their true interest. It therefore suffices to give them land all at once (agrarian reform) and "enlighten them" (literacy training), so that their support for the revolution will be acquired once and for all. Furthermore, in the minds of the Khalqi, the peasant has no positive traits: He does not think, has no autonomous forms of organization or culture. He is a blank sheet of paper living in the immediate present of his basic needs and reflecting the thought of those over him: the mullah or the teacher.<sup>5</sup> We shall not analyze Afghan agrarian society here, a society which, as one would suspect, does not correspond to the simplistic formulas of the Khalqi. Let us simply note that the latter, in contrast to the Soviet authors, never envisage the existence of a "tribal" mode of production. In economics as well as in politics, tribalism remains the unconsidered element of the Khalqi ideology (and the constant of their political behavior). Finally, the concept of the mode of production is considered in strictly economic terms, while in fact, the economic relationship is included in the social relationship.

## 2. Agrarian Reform

Two orders define the agrarian reform. Order No 6, in August 1978, does away with the mortgage (*gerao*) and usury (*sud*). Debts and mortgages more than 5 years old are cancelled and land given back to the former owner without anything in exchange. Land mortgages for less than 5 years is given back in exchange for a modulated reimbursement of the loan. These measures affect only poor peasants, defined by the threshold equivalent to 10 *jerib* (2 hectares) of prime land. Use of the development bank is reserved for organizations and individuals designated by the local agrarian reform commission, which is headed by the district leader.<sup>6</sup>

Order No 8 (30 November 1978) organizes the redistribution of land. Article 1 proclaims the determination to eliminate feudal and semi-feudal conditions. A family must not own over the equivalent of 30 *jerib* (6 hectares) of prime land. The land is divided into seven categories each with a coefficient (from irrigated orchards to dry land left fallow for over 2 years, the coefficient ranges from 1 to .10). Beneficiaries of the reform are placed in six categories by order of priority: 1) landless peasants already working on the land to be redistributed; 2) landless peasants and village day laborers where the land to be redistributed is located; 3) small landowners from that same village; 4) landless peasants from the district and nomads frequently residing there; 5) landless peasants and day laborers from the region; and finally 6) landless peasants and nomads from other regions. Land exceeding the ceiling (*ezafe*) is confiscated without any indemnification and redistributed to beneficiaries of the reform in terms of their order of priority and a certain ceiling, under the legal ownership ceiling. The law also sets up the legal framework for agricultural cooperatives reserved for those who have less than the equivalent of 20 *jerib* of good land.

### 3. Failure of the Agrarian Reform

The reform apparently seemed to be sufficiently well-defined to be accepted by 80 percent of the peasants with less than 20 herib.<sup>7</sup> Instituted in January 1979, it began to be carried out in peri-urban areas where big landholdings existed (Herat and Kandahar, mainly). And yet, as shown by the chronology of the uprisings, it was often the arrival of the agrarian reform commission that would set off the revolt. Why? We shall examine the different factors involved in the failure.

#### Ideological Rejection

The idea of the redistribution of land comes into sharp contradiction with the notion of the intangibility of property stated by the sharia. For the Afghan peasant, it is not property that is unjust, but abuse of the position of domination, either through money (usury), or power (authoritarianism and corruption). The peasant demands reform, not of property, but of financial practices and practices of power. The reform is imposed precisely based on practices of power that the peasant challenges and it is presented within an ideological framework (the class struggle) that is not his own and that does not respond to his experience.

#### Lack of Realism of the Reform

The criteria on which the reform is based do not correspond to the socioeconomic reality of Afghanistan. There has never been a distinct stratum of exploiters opposed to a mass of exploited people. Many day laborers have some land and live like landowners and many landowners are indebted.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, usurers are not necessarily landowners. Unlike usury, the mortgage (gerao) is not in any way unpopular. It is the only way for the peasant to have liquid money by protecting himself against the high interest rates that remain his main problem. The worsening of living conditions in rural areas (and one should specify: in the rich plains close to the urban centers) came not from a feudalization of economic relations, but on the contrary, from the introduction of capitalist-type norms (monetarization of trade, transformation of relations that are both social and economic into purely economic relations). And yet, the regime has never wanted to recognize the existence of a capitalist phase.

The question of communal property is not taken up by the reform, while these holdings (pasture, but also frequently water) have a real existence and are claimed by the peasants. The nomads are systematically defined as poor and dreaming of a sedentary life, while in many regions, the nomads are large landowners (Logar) and in any case, richer than most sedentary people (as in Hazarajat), meaning that they do not identify with the definition that the reform gives of them.

The reform defines agricultural operations based on two criteria: a limited family (according to the law, a family is made up of one adult over the age of 18 with his wife and children, even a single man living alone<sup>9</sup>) and the area. However, the Afghans generally live in extended families



(brothers staying on undivided property after the death of the father) and the farm operation is defined not in terms of area alone (except for irrigated land), but in terms of seed, the plow (*golba*) or water rights. A redistribution that only deals with area has no meaning, especially since there is no reliable registry. Under the royalist regime, the local communities, facing a government official who required that land be given to a landowner and only one and who did not recognize the notion of communal property did registrations under the name of the clan chief or the tribal chief, which had the result of creating false landholdings on paper. The reform denies common law or the sharia and presumes a nonexistent state of law: Peasants must furnish legal documents,<sup>10</sup> the agrarian reform committee acts on the basis of a tax registry that never existed and the definition of the family as a limited committee does not correspond to the sociological reality of Afghanistan.

The matter of water rights is referred to a future commission headed by officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and which will obviously not be set up when the peasants must irrigate their fields.

In a word, the agrarian reform was carried out based on an abstract model of Afghan society, one not pertinent and not springing from a field investigation, but from dogmatic formulas. It is not surprising that instead of rallying 98 percent of the people against 2 percent oppressors, these "reforms" resulted in a general revolt of 75 percent of the rural world.

#### Perverse Effects of the Reform

The complex system of sharecropping that prevailed in Afghanistan was naturally egalitarian, but it did operate and it was a system of reciprocity. However, the reform broke the traditional reciprocity (distribution of work, of land, seed, milking animals and water rights between the landowner and the sharecropper), without introducing new forms of distributing seed, draft animals, fertilizer and water rights. Dispossessed owners were careful to distribute seed to their sharecroppers and traditional lenders refused to lend. Naturally, there were plans on paper for the establishment of an agricultural development bank and an office to distribute seed and fertilizer, but nothing had been set up at the time the reform went into effect. One concrete example shows how the poor peasants, sincerely attracted by the reform, were transported 1,000 kilometers from home to occupy confiscated land. Nothing had been planned for them (no seed, loans or houses) and they then returned home, poorer than ever.<sup>11</sup>

The mere announcement of the reform would therefore cut the peasant off from his seed supply. He could not buy seed at the bazaar, because the traditional lenders refused any loan following elimination of usury and mortgages. Many landowners, out of fear of seeing their land confiscated, did not plant their crops, meaning that production fell by one-third in the spring of 1979.<sup>12</sup> The last ill effect: The reform broke up the few large properties where mechanization had raised the level of profitability. One example in the region of Herat where the reform took place shows: In the village of Sangbast, a large landowner (300 jerib) gave 170 jerib out on shares to a single farmer, who employed 15 farm laborers and used one tractor. After the distribution, the sharecropper in question now had only 5 jerib (like all farm workers in the village). The tractor was unused and no farm was profitable. The peasants immediately asked for the return of the absent landowner, but

also, the reconstitution of the farm operation under the leadership of the sharecropper (personal observation, October 1982).

But what the reform destroyed was not a mere economic structure, but rather, the whole social framework, not only of production, but of the peasant's very life. Community work (repair of canals, for example) was explicitly entrusted to a state quite incapable of doing it.<sup>13</sup> The malik and the khan had a social function, as we have seen: middlemen in relations with the state and bosses who ensured the sharecroppers of protection and a social position. But the regime wanted to eliminate them.

It is therefore clear that the purpose of the reform was to break the entire socioeconomic framework of the Afghan rural areas. One may consequently wonder whether one can still speak of errors committed in the designing of the reform.

Was the agrarian reform viable?

The official purpose of the reform was to create a whole multitude of small properties of from 20 to 30 jerib of good land (4 to 5 hectares). Theoretically speaking, such farms are profitable, but the peasants must also have loans because the law prevents them from pledging redistributed land. But a rapid calculation shows that the sums needed to get out of debt and for proper farming would be 10 billion afghanis for the state (1 billion francs), while all agricultural loans for the year 1977 amounted to 1 billion afghanis.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the 20 to 30 jerib only constitute a ceiling. In fact, the farms set up by the reform were far under that ceiling and therefore, not profitable, quite simply because all land theoretically recoverable is not enough.<sup>15</sup>

The regime could not fail to be aware of the nonviability of the agrarian reform. Knowing its concern for burning all bridges, one may formulate the following hypothesis: The purpose of the agrarian reform was to break down traditional structures and not create a small viable property. In the second phase, there were plans to set up cooperatives that would group the small growers benefiting from the reform, aware of the impossibility of making their operation profitable. Furthermore, the official text containing the status of agricultural appeared in September 1978, meaning before Order No 8. If the agrarian reform was not a collectivist reform, it seems clearly conceived as the first stage in a future collectivization. This is why the officials did not truly try to set up a bank credit system that would be effective, for it would have risked stabilizing small landowners. However, it goes without saying that the peasants who welcomed the reform preferred a move backward rather than forward at the time.

#### 4. Attempt To Apply the Agrarian Reform

One can distinguish three zones: 1) zones in which the reform did not even begin to go into effect: This is definitely the country that rose up in 1978, but also the remote regions and very mountainous areas (Hazarajat); 2) areas in which the arrival of the agrarian reform commission brought about the uprising (as we shall see below); and 3) areas in which the agrarian reform was carried out. The latter are an interesting case because while some remained bastions of the regime, others would come over to the armed opposition a few weeks after the agrarian reform.

As general rule, the areas where the agrarian reform took place are those in which large landownings are important, where owners are often absent and where relations of reciprocity between khan and dehqan have disappeared in order to give way to a mere relationship of economic exploitation. In this case, it is very frequent that the khan and dehqan do not belong to the same qawm or even the same ethnic group (Pashto khan and Tajik dehqan, for example). Land at stake is generally the object of a recent appropriation thanks to capital of mercantile origin, which explains the absence of socio-political links between the khan and dehqan (but there has also been a dissolution of bonds of traditional solidarity between the two groups within the same qawm<sup>16</sup>). These areas are Herat (along the Hari-Rud from Obe to Ghoryan), Farah, Nimruz, Logar and Kunar and the suburbs of Kandahar, as well as the perimeters of certain cities. In all cases, the landowners are often rich merchants from the city who have invested in land. However, one must not exaggerate the size of these properties (ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand jerib, or rarely over a thousand hectares of land, not all of which is irrigated). It would appear that when the owner is from the local tribal aristocracy (Durrani, Baluchis) and where the sharecroppers are from the same tribal group, the latter rejected the reform.

Furthermore, in regions in which the overlapping of diverse qawm is very strong, the reform actually served as a pretext for a redistribution of power between politically rival groups, without the "class struggle" aspect playing any role. This is true of the region of Fayzabad (Badakhshan), where land was distributed to the relatives and allies of former Maoist Taher Badakhshi, from a great family of local notables, to the detriment of families involved in the resistance.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, in the valley of Kunar and the region of Khost, therefore in tribal areas, the reform enabled "younger" clans to gain control vis-a-vis the "older" clans from the same tribes that traditionally held political power because they had more warriors and influence. Behind the phraseology, it is therefore the traditional segmented nature of the Afghan political scene that provides the key to application of the reform.

How did the beneficiaries of the agrarian reform act when the uprising broke out in their region? Generalizations are difficult to make because of the difficulties of any survey, but an interesting phenomenon appears. Where there had been absent landowners, the peasantry joined the resistance en masse (in Herat, for example, the uprising broke out only a few weeks after the redistribution, which remained incomplete). The peasants kept land distributed because the owners did not come back (generally true for big landowners who were absent). On the other hand, when the owner remained behind (average landowners, meaning with about 100 jerib, or 20 hectares), the clergy pushed for the restitution of land in exchange for a better distribution of the harvest. In contrast, in regions in which the segmentation into qawm and rival clans remains the dominant problem of local political life, the groups which took control of the land became government militias.

Almost nowhere does the peasant act in terms of membership in an economic group, but rather, in a qawm. This is also valid for the landowners. In areas of absent landowners, the feeling of belonging to a qawm is weak in both groups (peasants and landowners) and the problem is solved by the

disappearance of landowners incapable of taking control of the uprising where they are not well established. In contrast, in areas where the qawm phenomenon is dominant, it is the latter that governs the relationship to the land, a source of power more than wealth. Quite often, the very members of the agrarian reform commission used it to promote their group in local competition.

Finally, the influence of the mullah, opposed to the reform for religious reasons (not economic, because the Afghan clergy is not a big landowner), worked against the redistribution, with two exceptions involving our preceding categories: The clergy did not support the absent landowners, accused of fleeing the resistance and above all, of having acquired the land with illicit gains (loans for interest) and the tribal groups plunged into the competition for land preferred to follow the tribal code (in which the appropriation of the land of the enemy group is a value) rather than the sharia.

Whatever the case, application of the reform was very limited in space (and halted after the Soviet invasion, at any rate). The figure given by the KABUL NEW TIMES of 17 November 1983 (650,000 landless peasants receiving land in 5 years) does not seem very credible, especially since the same newspaper gave the figure of only 300,000 peasants 5 days earlier). The reform did not allow the regime to form a social base, but did create a consensus against it among the peasantry. In the final analysis, it helped only a few isolated groups that would become local militias. Regarding the future resistance, if opposition to the reform strengthened the intangibility of land ownership, it also caused owners to lighten contracts (except in Hazarajat) and the resistance not to duck the social question.

## 5. The Literacy Campaign

In the imagination of the regime, the literacy campaign played a role as important as the agrarian reform. The idea was that it would be enough to enlighten the people for them to become solid supporters of the new regime. Here one finds the determination and constant pedagogy of the Khalqi. The campaign was to be immediate and total: children, adults, girls, women and old people were to be educated in a year. The program provides for 18,500 instructors (including 16,000 volunteers) in rural areas starting at the beginning of 1979 (but it began with elements available by May 1978). A literacy course is supposed to last 150 hours. Instructors have a new text. Every Thursday morning, they are brought together at the district capital for political training. Actually, it has been clear from the very beginning that literacy training and indoctrination are linked. The text rewards urban and Westernized behavior (this tendency was already at work under the old regime). A caricatural page presents the people marching (three intellectuals in suits and ties carrying a banner against a background of the crowd in traditional garb). Behavior having to do with the land and the peasantry is attributed to the grandparents. The father, in contrast, is a worker in a modern plant. "The" book is no longer the Koran, but the textbook. One entire page presents the tank as the symbol of the people's liberation. Slogans and watchwords fill a third of the pages. It should be recalled that this campaign enjoys the support of UNESCO advisers in Kabul, who discreetly label the third of the program devoted to propaganda the "course with socioeconomic content."



As in the case of the agrarian reform, the attitude of the people regarding literacy training is complex. There is no rejection of knowledge. Teachers enjoy a certain consideration in rural areas if they do not clash with tradition. Contrary to what has often been said, the regime of the king had made an enormous effort aimed at education in rural areas (the increase in numbers of the PDPA is a direct consequence of that effort). It is estimated that 30 percent of the boys were in school under the old regime, compared with 5 percent of the girls, and these two figures were increasing.<sup>19</sup> The method of starting schools, very progressive, consisted in rousing demand among the villagers, then bringing the entire village into construction of the buildings, with the government then bearing the burden of the teacher's salary. The Khalqi regime has given up this progressive aspect. Literacy teams must go everywhere immediately and are not made up of teachers, of which there is not enough, but of young high school or university students sympathetic to the regime.

Opposition does not revolve around the principle of the campaign (which would even be somewhat welcome in urban areas), but the way in which it is conducted. First of all, the often authoritarian and arrogant behavior of the teachers, especially when they are outside their native region, clashes with a society used to a hierarchy and manners. Next, the requirement that old people attend the courses is profoundly humiliating to them. The propaganda shocks the religious. Above all, the requirement of the participation of the girls in the courses would set off the revolt. The need for feminine instruction, contrary to what one might think, is not at stake. Only the very traditionalist milieus -- not necessarily religious -- are opposed. However, all absolutely reject any idea of mingling. But lacking enough teachers, the course is given by a man who -- and this makes it even worse -- comes from the city, perceived as a place of immorality. It is that and not the principle of literacy training that sets off the rejection.

The map of the literacy campaign is the reverse of that of the uprisings: At a peak at the beginning of 1979, it dwindles starting in the spring of 1979. By the winter of 1979-1980, literacy training is totally interrupted in rural areas and finally affected only urban areas that cannot escape the control of the regime.

## 6. Reform of the Dowry

The ban on the dowry by Order No 7 (October 1978) did not rouse the anticipated reaction, because Afghan society is nevertheless highly divided on the subject. Naturally, the fathers of daughters to marry viewed it as a loss, but the single young men welcomed the measure. The clergy remained very divided, with modernists carefully distinguishing between the *mahr*, the security deposit provided for in the sharia, paid to the woman and whose amount is strictly limited, and the dowry (*shirbaha*) paid to the father and which is a simple custom. The traditionalists, on the other hand, see in the size of the dowry a guarantee of morality and the stability of the family (actually, repudiations are much rarer in Afghanistan than in the rest of the Muslim world). By maintaining the *mahr*, Order No 7 did not clash with Islamic law.

## 7. Reforms Against Tradition?

The communists, like many Western observers (and ourselves at the time), interpreted the uprising as a rejection of the reforms, as when King Amanullah was ousted in 1928. But a more thorough investigation shows that things are much more complicated. While there is in Afghan society a traditionalist party (especially in tribal milieus) opposed to any reform, increasingly broad sectors of the population supported the reforms in depth, including, as we have seen, among the clergy. In studying the manner of the uprisings, we can see that it is not the principle of the reforms that stirred up the people, but the manner of their application (with the resulting repression) or the contradictions which poorly conceived reforms meant for the people. Then there is the considerable cultural factor. Instead of being presented in a technical manner, the reforms were put in an ideological way, in an openly Marxist phraseology that deeply shocked the religious beliefs of the people. Finally, the application of the reforms resulted in a brutal, unprecedented penetration of the village communities by the state. The revolt was anti-state as much as it was anticommunist.

## 8. Repression

Terrible repression struck the Afghan population during the 18 months of the Taraki-Amin regime. In February 1980, the government of Babrak Karmal admitted that 12,000 had been "officially" killed, but these were only the persons who had disappeared into the Pul-i Charkhi prison. And yet, executions and missing persons in rural areas were very numerous, although less known than those in Kabul. From 50,000 to 100,000 persons disappeared in all. Here also, the attitude of the regime is consistent with its image of Afghan society. While the exploiters are but a small minority and while the people are not ready to expose them themselves, the forces of repression eliminated the handful of counterrevolutionaries directly. Massive arrests began by the fall of 1978 and culminated the following year. In the cities, the victims were the high clergy, dissident intellectuals and the mass of ordinary people picked up on the slightest pretext. Few families in Kabul have remained untouched. In particular, the regime sometimes went after those closest to it, such as the liberals, Maoists and, starting in August 1978, the members of the Parcham faction. The Maoists, numerous among the students but with no refuge in rural areas or ties with big families in the capital (even if they are sometimes linked with local small landowners) and (an aggravating circumstance for the Pashto khan) belonging to non-Pashto ethnic groups, were the target of particularly severe repression that bled them white at the end of 1980. One can say that in the cities, where the reforms were not applied and where the people were more receptive to change, it was the policy of blind repression that alienated the people from the regime.

In rural areas, the victims were the clergy, the Sufi orders and local notables. But tribal solidarity transcended political cleavages. For example, Sayyaf, future president of the Islamic alliance and a member of the same tribe as Hafizullah Amin (Kharruti tribe, of which Hekmatyar is also a member) was spared when in Pul-i Charkhi.

In the villages, the potential opponents would be taken away by "security groups" from the provincial capital and never heard of again. It is striking to see the large number of ulema or pir who let themselves be captured in this way: proof that they did not expect to be arrested and that they had no antigovernment activities. It would be tiresome and impossible to retrace these arrests. Let us note the assassination of the Naqshbandi pir from Purchaman (Farah), who was extremely influential among the Aymaq: Hajji Baha'uddin Jan, killed along with his two sons; the murder of the main *modarres* of Maymana (Mawlawi Alu'uddin), killed in the summer of 1979 with a number of his students and several dozen lycee students; and the disappearance of a dozen local officials from the town of Lawlash (Faryab), taken hostage by the army at the same time. In Ghalmin (Ghor), it was the former deputy (Hajji Abdul Ghaffur) and two religious officials (Mawlawi Fazl Ahmad and Khalifa Nur Mahmud) who disappeared. In Kandahar, Mawlawi Abduraheb Akhundzada and Mawlawi Nur Mohammad Akhundzada disappeared. These are only examples. In addition to these selective arrests, massacres of civil populations took place in Samangan, in Kunar (Kerala), Farah and Darah-ye Souf. Partial investigations were conducted, but the history of this repression<sup>20</sup> remains to be written. At the time, one could speak of the precise elimination of certain categories of the population (clergy and officials) rather than genocide. Precise cases of this "selectivity" can be cited. In January 1979, the entire Mojaddidi family still in Kabul was arrested and taken to Pul-i Charkhi; all males were executed. Likewise, in June, several hundred Islamist militants who had been arrested at the time of Daoud and who had remained in prison without a trial since 1975 were executed in one night. The Shiite clergy was more particularly targeted: Sayyad Wa'ez, who headed the Mohammedia madrasa and who was one of the promoters of the Shiite renewal, disappeared in February 1979 with most of the teachers. Dozens of Shiite religious were arrested in Charkent, Darra-ye Souf, Yakaolang and Jaghori (including three shaykhs trained in Iran: Sharifi, Ahmadi, Faqihi). Many barely escaped, as in the case of local pir (the pir of Tagao and all those from the Herat region), along with Shaykh Assef Mohseni, Shiite leader of Kandahar.

The areas affected are those where the government had some military control, but where it felt its lack of control over the people: the west, the north and Kabul. Quite often in these regions, the repressive harshness concealed old ethnic antagonisms and the Hazaras on the fringes of Hazarajat paid a particularly heavy price. The tribal zones of the east (and the establishment) remained protected by tribal solidarities.

The purpose is clear: doing away with the "old" Afghanistan, meaning the social structures and the memory of a people by striking at intermediate-level officials (rather than the aristocracy, less dangerous because cut off from the people), the ulema, holders of the old millenary Islamic culture, and finally, the young non-Marxist intellectuals, who might show another path to modernity.

#### NOTES

1. Concerning the coup d'etat, the best writings are A. Arnold, "Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective" and "Afghanistan's Two-Party Communism,"

as well as M. Broxup, "The Soviets in Afghanistan," CENTRAL ASIAN SURVEY, Sol. 1, No 4, 1983, and R. Newel, "The Struggle for Afghanistan," 1981.

2. Between Amin and the Tartar Sultan Galiev, president of the Muslim Military College at the time of the October revolution, the ideological link is very close. Sultan Galiev also see the army as the avant-garde to be substituted for the missing proletariat. He dreamed of an autonomous path to socialism for Muslims, while being an intransigent atheist. A. Bennigsen and C. Lemerrier-Quelquejay, "L'Islam en Union Sovietique," 1968, p 98 and the following.
3. Speech to students of 1 February 1979 (government brochure: Bibliotheca Afghanica).
4. Speech of 1 January 1979 on the 14th anniversary of the 1st Congress of the PDPA, Ibid.
5. See the interview with Khalqi militants in the A2 film: "Afghanistan, Targeted for Tedium," Christophe de Pontfilly (January 1984).
6. G. Vercellin, "Afghanistan 1973-1978," 1979, p 105 and the following. All orders are included.
7. The figures on the areas of properties vary, but this threshold of 20 jerib seems to be general. See "Area Handbook of Afghanistan," 1973, p 36, quoted by G. Chaliand, "Report on the Afghan Resistance," Davydov, quoted by G. Vercellin (Op. cit., p 81); and finally, G. Etienne, "Afghanistan or the Contingencies of Cooperation," 1972, p 83; see also J.-H. Grevemeyer, in "Mardomnameh," 1980, p 140 and the following.
8. "Mardomnamen," 1980, p 167.
9. Chapter 1, Article 2 of Order No 8, in G. Vercellin, Op. cit., p 107.
10. Article 5 of Order No 6; see also G. Etienne, Op. cit., p 154.
11. AFGHANISTAN JOURNAL, No 1, 1982, p 28; A. Olesen, "The Musallis: The Graincleaners of East Afghanistan."
12. Newell, Op. cit., p 81.
13. Chapter 2, Article 7 of Order No 8, in Vercellin, Op. cit., p 109.
14. J.-H. Grevemeyer, in "Mardomnameh," 1980, p 167.
15. G. Etienne, "Rural Development in Asia," 1982, p 58.
16. J. Anderson, "There Is No Khans Anymore" [sic], MIDDLE EAST JOURNAL, No 32, 1978.



17. N. Shahrani, "Causes and Context of Differential Reactions in Badakhshan to the Saur Revolution," 1980.
18. ALIFBA, first-year textbook, Ministry of Instruction and Education, Kabul, 1358 (1979).
19. Bernardin, "Education and International Aid in Afghanistan," in COOPERATION TECHNIQUE, 1972, No 68.
20. For a collection of accounts on the repression, see M. Barry: "Soviet Repression and Wars," in TEMPS MODERNES, July-August 1980.

## 6. The Uprisings (1978-1979)

At the time of the coup d'etat of 27 April 1978, neither the observers nor the population perceived of the new regime as communist. On 20 May, an expert, Louis Dupree, published a letter in the NEW YORK TIMES entitled: "A Communist Label Is Unjustified." And yet, the phraseology of the regime left no room for doubt: a call for the unity of the proletariat, poor peasants and enlightened intellectuals for the overthrow of the feudal system, solidarity with socialist countries against imperialism and the publication of telegrams of support from internationalist paracomunist organizations. But many "revolutions" of the Third World have accustomed Western observers to a gap between a revolutionary rhetoric and a more moderate practice. The Afghan communist movement and the Soviet penetration are largely underestimated. Babrak, Taraki and Amin, although well-known as individuals, passed as drawing room communists. The USSR was considered as having sufficient guarantees in Afghanistan not to have to run the risk of a major political crisis in seizing a country it already controlled.

Daoud was not very popular in the country. The coup d'etat would generally be perceived as a mishap of the *padshahgardi*, the "game of kings" that modifies the top levels of government without changing society. And yet, new elements did appear. Except for the brief episode of Tajik Bacha-ye Saqqao in 1920 [?], it was the first time that power had slipped from the hands of the Durrani Pashto (going to the Ghilzay Pashto). The new leaders belonged to the petty bourgeoisie (officers and civil servants) and openly claiming to be socialists. Rhetoric and the ethnic and social origins were quite new. The reactions of the people fell into five unequal groups. Members and sympathizers of the PDPA immediately grabbed authority at their working places while awaiting official confirmation: Naturally, it was enthusiastic. The small handful of Islamist students and politicized ulema knew very well that the new leaders were communist, because they frequented them and had fought them for 10 years in the schools and universities. They immediately went underground, followed by the majority of the Maoists, who knew they could expect nothing from the pro-Soviets. A third group, made up of the modernist but noncommunist fringe of the urban population, along with the poor peasantry of the peri-urban zones would favorably greet a regime it did not perceive as communist and from which it expected reforms made necessary by the worsening of the economic situation (expansion of the market economy

and demographic growth). The great mass of the rural population would remain waiting, although in certain regions such as Laghman, meetings to explain the agrarian reform obtained important participation. Finally, a certain number of communities would react to the new regime on purely ethnic and tribal bases: a favorable reception among the Ghilzay, whose turn it was to be in power, violent opposition among the Nuristanis, very closely linked to the previous regime (Abdul Qader Nuristani, Daoud's minister of interior, was killed at the time of the coup). The uprising began in July 1978 on tribal bases, but would very quickly gain the look of an ideological struggle. We shall study the chronology and geography of the uprisings, then the process that led peasants to revolt. We shall take as the criterion of the uprising the attack on the district post (*uluswali*) by the population.

In July 1978, the people of the Nuristani valley of Waygal sent a delegation to the Manugi post, located in the territory of the Pashto Safis, to request information on the fate of officers from the valley who had disappeared following the coup. The latter, suspected of being loyal by definition to the minister of interior (since they were of the same *qawm*), were summarily executed, but no one knew it. It would be noted that the new communist regime played on the tribal structures (one can trust only someone from one's own *qawm*) to ensure its power. While this policy assured it the favor of the Pashto originally, it permanently alienated non-Pashto groups that a more flexible policy (such as the one the Soviets would try to follow after 1980) could have won over. Whatever the case, the Manugi affair degenerated into a riot,<sup>1</sup> the post being taken on 20 July, and the revolt stretched to the Nuristani valleys of Waygal, Bashgal (Kamdesh) and Ramgal (Upper Laghman). In October 1978, the two government posts in the Bashgal valley (Kamdesh and Bargimatal) were taken. The counterattack took very interesting forms. It was based on tribal and nonpolitical criteria. The government offered arms and money to the tribal groups hostile to the Nuristanis: the Gujar, herders living as nomads in the mountains and fighting over pasture with the Nuristanis, and the Pashto tribes of Kunar (Meshwani, traditional enemies of the Nuristanis) or Nangrahar (Shinwari). A mechanized battalion accompanied this tribal coalition enticed by gain. Kamdesh was retaken by government troops in November, but in February, the Nuristanis rallied a coalition from the three valleys that crushed the government battalion in Mirdesh and retook Kamdesh. Peace was made with the other tribal groups and the government troops would never again gain hold in Nuristan. The new element was that a certain number of Islamist intellectuals from elsewhere, including the future commanding officer of the Panjshir, Massoud, participated in the fighting with the Nuristanis. Likewise, a supratribal solidarity appeared among certain tribes (among the Safis, for example), who refused to participate in the looting. Already, the first signs of tension were appearing among traditional tribal leaders, such as Amin Anwar Khan, from the Kam tribe, and the fundamentalist mullahs such as Mullah Rustam (Kam) and Mullah Afzal (Kati). However, fighting in Nuristan had little impact on the country, for Nuristan is isolated and specific.<sup>2</sup>

The uprisings therefore began in the northeastern region of Afghanistan as early as 1978. The second region to rise up would be the west, starting in March 1979. The city of Herat was the point of departure and the insurrection extended into Farah Province. It then moved to the center, with Dara-ye Suf,

in Hazarajat, as early as December 1978, followed by northern Uruzgan (April). The anniversary of the revolution of 27 April witnessed the Hazarajat uprising (with Yakaolang, Nahur, Malestan, Lal and Shahrestan), the Aymaq country (Daulatyar) and the northwest (Faryab Province and Gadghis, with the taking of Jawand in April). Maymana revolted in June. In the fall, the entire central region from Ghazni to Maymana and Farah to Darra-ye Souf was free.

Except for Wardak, Uruzgan and Logar (massacre of the census commission in Barak-i Barak), which revolted in April, the Pashto regions were calmer than the Persian-speaking regions. This relative calm was due to two factors: The new Khalqi government being Pashto, it retained a "national" legitimacy it had never had for the other ethnic groups. The influence of the Islamists being less in tribal areas, the ideological factors took longer to act. Tribal leaders still played the regime's card to ensure their local power and the tribal policy of the regime backed them in their attitude.

The first uprisings in Pashto areas began after the Persian-speaking areas. A good indicator is the lack of security of literacy teams from the cities. The first murders of instructors took place in Shamali, north of Kabul, as early as May 1978, then in Herat in the fall. In the spring of 1979, the literacy campaign was halted in the province; the regime had ceased to control rural areas.<sup>3</sup> The Ghilzay, however well-represented in the government, started their dissidence at this time. The people of Wardak, contacted by the regime in order to wage a punitive expedition against the Hazaras (always the tribal policy) obtained weapons and took the government post (April 1979). Logar witnessed the massacre of the census commissions (April). There were disturbances around Jellalabad, where a mutiny took place in April. In August 1979, it was dangerous to stray from the paved road from Kabul to Herat.

The summer of 1979 witnessed the beginning of the Panjshir uprising (6 July) and that of Takhar (August). Even more serious for the regime, the first disturbances began in Kabul: riots in the Shiite district of Chendawol (July) and above all, on 5 August, the Bala-Hissar mutiny, the largest barracks in the city, attributed to the Maoist officers (whose role has been overestimated in the West, the members of the Jamiat having played a role along with other dissidents). At the time, the former Maoist militants, scattered among a multitude of organizations of vague ideological content (the largest being SAMA), played an important role in the urban opposition in Kabul (dissemination of tracts, strikes). The urban peripheries, although favorable to the regime in 1978, became dangerous. One could not go outside the center of Kandahar at night. Bazaars south of Mazar-i Sharif, such as Sangcharak, were taken by the resistance.

Curiously enough, until that time, one scarcely heard of the Paktya tribes. Government control was never very strong in the region and the regime was very careful not to send its literacy and agrarian reform teams, except to Khost. Many Khalqi officers were from Paktya and avoided challenging the interests of their tribal group. However, in Afghan tradition, the tribes are the spearhead of the movements protesting the regime and any call for the uprising of tribes is an alarm for the regime in Kabul. This is why the regime reacted quite violently to the new dissidence of the Jadran tribe after the harvests

of the summer of 1979. It would be the only large-scale military operation carried out by the regime in a year and a half of government. However, the revolt of a single tribe of Paktya (the others remained passive) was much less threatening than the uprising in Herat or Hazarajat. Here also, one must consider that the regime remains a prisoner of its tribal perception of Afghan policy and its historical references. The key to political power had so far been in the hands of the tribes, which, paid by the British, would have thrown out the reformist King Amanullah.<sup>4</sup> The tribal myth is such that Amin decided to launch a wide-ranging military operation in Paktya lasting from September to October. It was a crushing defeat. The road from Gardez to Khost was still strewn with hundreds of shells of vehicles and armored vehicles. The defeat, combined with the elimination in September 1979 of the pro-Soviet Taraki by a more nationalist Amin, was one of the elements that would unleash the Soviet intervention.

The uprisings increased in number in the tribal areas: Zabul and Ghazni in September and Kunar. In November, the Asmar affair took place: The commanding officer of the garrison, Rauf, mutinied after having Soviet advisers and party members executed, but his weapons were recovered by the Shinwari from Kunar affiliated with the Hezb-i islami.

On the eve of the Soviet invasion, three-fourths of the country was therefore in a state of insurrection that took place in two stages: the spring of 1979 for the center and the north and the fall of 1979 for the tribal areas. Many things remain unknown, especially since observers tend to overestimate what happens in Kabul, Kunar and Paktya, which are more accessible. However, one can discern the following general traits:

Except for the Nuristanis, the uprising began in the Persian-speaking areas (Tajiks and Hazaras). Where the Pashto participated in the first uprisings, they were nontribalized Pashto areas (Logar, Laghman, with Wardak and Uruzgan as the exception), where the influence of the Islamist militants was often strong (Laghman, Nangrahar). The tribes lost the initiative of Afghan political life.

The Ghilzay and the Pashto in the east began their dissidence in the fall, after the revolts, a traditional scenario of tribal warfare. Their fighting spirit would equal that of the Persian-speakers, but the tribal structure would play on forms of organization and combat.

The Shiite Hazarajat became autonomous from the very beginning and would remain so.

Except in Herat, there was no coordination between the military uprisings and the people's uprisings, or between urban and peasant movements.

These general traits would be constant: three main types of resistance (non-tribal, tribal and Shiite) and noncoordination between the cities, the army and rural areas.

One can classify the areas that did not move before the Soviet invasion based on community categories (ethnic groups, tribal groups, and so on) or sociological classifications. Let us look at the community groups:



The Uzbeks remained calm, except near the Hazaras and the Tajiks (Takhar, Samangan, Sangcharak), where they experienced movement. Elsewhere, from Shibergan to Kunduz, they were passive. The Uzbek ethnic group has less structure and is less socially differentiated than the others and therefore, more receptive to the fascination of modernism (even if membership in the PDPA is very limited).<sup>5</sup> In the war, one finds a relative Tajik predominance in the leaders of the northern resistance. Our information on the behavior of the Turkmen at this time is very fragmentary, but they seem to have been very opposed to the new regime.

The Durrani tribes (from Kandahar to Farah) remained uncertain, as reflected, undoubtedly, by the relative caution of the high aristocracy until the Soviet invasion. The city of Kandahar was calm.

The Baluchi tribes did not move (nor did Nimruz Province, divided between the influence of the Baluchi aristocracy and the Maoists).

The Pashto communities in the north, although influenced by the Hezb-i islami, were slower to start to dissent than the Tajiks. Perhaps there is a reflex of community solidarity between the Pashto minority and the government cadres of the same origin who traditionally protected it.

A certain number of eastern tribes collaborated (Shinwari in Nangrahar, not to be confused with those of Kunar) or were "soft" (Mohmand, Jaji, Mangal, Tani, Waziri) and would remain so. Actually, many Khalqi are from tribal milieus and the tribes traditionally play a double game (receiving arms and subsidies from both camps, taking advantage of their key position to traffick, like the Mohmand). Finally, old rivalries with resisting tribes (Jadran) as well as the slightest impact of Islam kept them on the fringe of the jihad. Curiously enough, these are the tribes that caused the most trouble for the British in the past century.

The nomads out of necessity were more opportunistic, except in the case of the Taraki who, for reasons of tribal solidarity, were governmental until September [date illegible], the date of the assassination of Taraki, their co-tribesman.

The Ismaelis, traditionally persecuted and scorned by the other ethnic groups, generally very poor, not very religious and blindly following their leaders (the *moqi*), remained neutral and even supplied militiamen in Badakhshan, as well as the governor of Doshi (from the family of the Kayan sayyad).<sup>6</sup>

Sociologically speaking, three categories remained neutral in the beginning:

The urban petty bourgeoisie made up of civil servants and office workers: Dependent on the state, modernist and with no possibility of returning to the country for lack of personal wealth, the civil servants (*mamur*) would remain at their post at least until the Soviet invasion and would prefer exile to the resistance. Their passiveness was normal insofar as they were the social base par excellence of the regime and are scarcely disturbed by the Islamist wave (at least in Kabul, for many provincial civil servants, mainly in the

west, would be sensitive to Islamist ideologies or, for those older, to Sufi preaching). The shopkeepers would, in contrast, very quickly join the opposition.

Classless peasants, especially in urban peripheries: Where large landholdings developed and where social relations between khan and sharecroppers give way to a mere economic relationship, the landless peasants without anything to lose accepted the agrarian reform and rather easily enrolled in the government militia (well paid task). Such a situation developed around Herat, Kandahar, Jellalabad, Pul-i Khumri, but not in Kabul, where small landholdings prevail. In certain places (Khost, Kunar), these groups correspond to these "younger" tribal segments (*qesher*) having lost political and economic power vis-a-vis the richer and larger clans (such as the Mandozay and the Ismaelkheyl of Khost, facing the powerful Jadran tribe), or a detribalized population isolated in a tribal area. Thus, in Kunar, the Dihgan, non-tribalized Pashto tribes, occupying the shores, were for the regime, while the tribes of the adjacent valleys (Shinwari in the north, Safi in Pech) were with the resistance immediately. These collaborators would join with the lumpen and part of the urban youth without a future. From the very beginning, these are the groups that constituted the base of the government militia.

The establishment: Paradoxically enough, except for religious dignitaries, the establishment was less touched by the repression than the petty bourgeoisie or the provincial notables. Tribal solidarity would protect it. Many high officials of the old regime would remain in their posts, even if real power was exercised by young and incompetent Khalqi. These people would leave the country only with the Soviet invasion and sometimes, very late. Their motivation is very difficult to grasp, but the protection assured by tribal solidarity (we know that the Khalqi are often from tribal milieus in the east), the certainty that the bad times will pass and finally, the fact that the resistance emerged from nontribal and non-Pashto milieus (reminiscence of Bacha-ye Saqqao, who remains the pet peeve of the Westernized bourgeoisie), all of these factors incited the establishment not to join the resistance.

Geographically speaking, the strong points of the regime were in the beginning the center of Kabul and Jellalabad, a whole series of small cities such as Sarobi, Pul-i Khumri, Khost, Gardez, Urgan, Lashkargah, certain clans, certain tribes (Jaji, the Shinwari of Jellalabad, and so on), even isolated villages dragged along by their local officials (Dashan in Herat, Pashet and Nari in Kunar, Nazyan in Nangrahar), who thus took the land of rival communities. As a general rule, the zones experiencing heavy mixing of uprooted tribal segments, migrants of all kinds and mixed ethnic groups, were easier to penetrate by the government (which could play on the rivalries and frustrations of the dominated groups) than the areas that are homogeneous from an ethnic or tribal standpoint. As one might suspect, these areas are mainly on the major roads (paved roads) or in isolated basins (Khost) in the middle of the mountains or the deserts.

Certain regions that later would become bastions of the resistance were very calm until the Soviet invasion: Shamali (plain north of Kabul), Kandahar and the northern cities.

Finally, the resistance was naturally more immediate in areas where, for reasons that are more cultural and ethnic than socioeconomic, the Communist Party was not well established (Hazarajat, Badakhshan, the west). In these areas, elements tending toward Marxism became Maoist out of opposition to the Pashto communism of the PDPA.

#### NOTES

1. The best account is by Schneiter, "The Liberation War in Nuristan," LES TEMPS MODERNES, 1980, p 237 and the following.
2. Another atypical fight would take place in March 1979 in Badakhshan, with the uprising of a violently anti-Pashto Maoist organization: the Setam-e melli, led by a friend of Babrak Karmal, Taher Badakhshi, and centered on Jurm. It launched an attack on Baharak in April 1979. Lacking support among the peasantry, the *setami* would be quickly crushed both by the Khalqi and the Jamiat resistance members. Survivors would rally to the regime in 1980 (N. Shahrani, "Causes and Context of Differential Reaction," 1980).
3. Communication of Michel Verron, former UNESCO expert in Kabul at the time.
4. We have seen that this position is dominant in the Marxist interpretation, as well as in many Western authors, except for the British (L. Poullada, "Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan," 1973). We have seen that the role of the Tajiks in these events was underestimated.
5. A. Shalinsky in "Islam and Ethnicity," (CENTRAL ASIAN SURVEY, Vol. 1, 1982, No 2/3), analyzes the feelings of the Uzbeks in the north of belonging to an ethnic group (feeling that one scarcely finds except among the Hazaras).
6. See the investigation by I. von Moos and E. Huwyler, "Entvolkerung eines Bergtales," ETHNOLOGICA HELVETICA, 1983.
7. Development of Uprisings Before the Soviet Invasion.

One must distinguish between spontaneous uprisings and those organized by Islamist militants. The former follow a constant pattern: a local, popular reaction to a direct, coercive intervention of regime militants from the provincial capital arriving in a district capital (*uluswali*), either to impose one of two major reforms (land or literacy) or to make arrests. The leaders of the first revolts were religious figures, local notables (village chiefs) or individuals, generally older. The revolt generally looked like a mass uprising preceded by preaching and followed by an attack on the government post of the capital with weapons available (including flint-lock guns). The post would generally be taken with heavy losses on both sides. Communist militants were executed; noncommunist soldiers and civil servants released. The revolt would then extend to the outer confines of the solidarity space to which the district belonged. The protagonists would spread to neighboring villages, as long as they belonged to the same group (ethnic group, tribe, and so on). When the boundaries of the solidarity space were reached, the

dynamic phase was over: Resistance members did not leave their solidarity space. They then faced two problems: weapons and organization. The second phase then commenced: rallying to the Peshawar parties. If governmental forces remained in the solidarity space (the plains in general, but also Bamyan, Chakhcharan), they served as a home base for the mujahidin, who then tended to organize in terms of military problems. If the solidarity space was totally liberated (Hazarajat, Nuristan), then civil society would take over and internal quarrels would poison the atmosphere. The most frequent case was that of a liberated solidarity space but bordered by a relatively static "front" (*jabha*). In this case, a guard would be set up on the borders, in which one would naturally find the most motivated elements of the resistance.

In areas where members of the Muslim Youth had long been established (Panjshir, Herat, Mazar, Badakhshan, Laghman, Nangrahar, Baghlan, and so on), the pattern is different. While spontaneous uprisings did take place before the summer of 1979, they were led by young intellectuals. If the region remained calm, the militants tended to take over the underground earlier and to set up guerrilla "hotbeds," without any popular uprising (the most significant being Panjshir). Finally, Herat constituted a separate case because it was the only massive uprising to have been the object of previous coordination between militants, the clergy and dissident officers. We shall now describe a number of examples, without attempting to exhaust them all, naturally. Our sources are our field research.

#### A. Examples of Spontaneous Uprisings

##### 1. Aymaq Country: Daulatyar and Chakhcharan

While the region of Chakhcharan has a number of Islamist teachers, the neighboring valley of Daulatyar is the domain of the traditional *arbab* [malek]. On 20 April 1979, an agrarian reform delegation (*hayat-e tawzi-e zamini*: land distribution commission), made up of a dozen armed Khalqi militants, came from the provincial capital (Chakhcharan) and set itself up in the school. Its arrival gave rise to agitation: The local mawlawi declared the reform contrary to the sharia and on 27 April, the anniversary of the communist coup, the post was attacked. Well-armed, the delegation resisted for 2 days, but fell when it ran out of ammunition. An old man succeeded in setting fire to the buildings, the delegation surrendered and was slaughtered. No reinforcement arrived (the provincial capital is three hours away by jeep). Reprisal bombings took place in the succeeding days, but the revolt spread. In northern Chakhcharan, the Ghalmin valley revolted at the beginning of June against agrarian reform and forced literacy training (*kursha-ye savad-amuzi*). The incident that set everything off seems to have been insults directed at the old people who refused to go to the classes. The communist teachers were killed and the school and the station burned. There was no garrison. It would appear that the Chakhcharan bazaar then fell to the insurgents. It would not be retaken until January 1980 by Soviets coming from Shindand. The entire region between Hari-rud and Maymana was free.



## 2. The Plains From Maymana to Mazar-e Sharif

The uprisings started from the large towns in the mountains at the beginning of June 1979: Sangcharak and Lawlash, from which the different posts were taken. In Lawlash, there was no agrarian reform or any literacy campaign. The announcement of the arrival of the census committee (*hayat-e sarshomari*) set off the revolt, led by the murid from the two main local Sufi brotherhoods. The uluswali was taken and retaken over and over. The government troops demanded hostages to put an end to the fighting. They would be executed (including the initiator of the revolt and head of the qawm: Haji Akbar Beg). The post was taken once and for all at the end of the summer. It should be noted that throughout the region, government attempts to implement reforms were very tardy.

## 3. Yakaolang (Central Hazarajat)

Here, there was no forced literacy training, but the announcement of the application of the agrarian reform unleashed the uprising in this atmosphere made tense by the arrest of local Shiite religious leaders and also from Kabul (Wa'ez, Mahmoudi, Nasser). The uluswali was taken on 30 April 1979 and except for an interlude of a month in May of the following year, would remain in the hands of the majahidin permanently. The leader of the rebels, Sayyad Mohammad Ali Lamam from Sulich, was killed in July 1979. The role of the local clergy was decisive.

## 4. Jaghori (Southern Hazarajat)

Here there was no agrarian reform or literacy campaign, but the disappearance of three religious figures educated in Iran (Sharifi, Ahmedi, Faqih) set off the uprising, which began in Malestan, led by a religious official (Mahdawi).

## 5. Daychopan (Zabul)

The district, settled by Pashto, rebelled on 15 April 1979, in response to the call from the religious leaders, against the agrarian reform. It is a region rich in madrasa linked to the Naqshabandi (spiritualist type) order. It was the first revolt in the south and the Daychopan valley would serve as a refuge for dissidents from Kandahar Province, controlled by the government until 1980.

One can therefore see that, whatever the local context, it was always a government move that set off the reaction of a population traditionally indifferent to what was going on in Kabul.

## B. Organized Uprisings: Herat

The Herat uprising presents several individual features: First of all, the agrarian reform was implemented without opposition. If it was interrupted, it was because the insurrection had broken out for other reasons. Next, as we were saying, it was the only uprising where coordination was apparent.

Finally, contrary to Vercellin's thesis,<sup>1</sup> the ethnic factors did not play any role and it was not an anti-Pashto revolt. Rather, this uprising bore the mark of the strategy preached by Rabbani following the communist coup: attempting a military counter coup supported by an uprising of the urban population. Hekmatyar's opposition to this strategy would cause the operation to fail in Kabul and elsewhere.

## 1. Prologue: The Salimi Uprising

Salimi is a large village southeast of Herat, on the Heri-rud plain, settled by a majority of Pashto who are often Persian-speaking and some Mongols (still speaking Mongolian). The agrarian reform had taken place (properties of several hundred jerib are not rare in the region). At the time of the arrival of the literacy commission on 27 February 1979, part of the inhabitants, especially Sarzays (Pashto), trained by four mullahs (including the leader of the revolt, Mullah Haydar), attacked the soldiers, protesting against the education of girls (it would appear that throughout Afghanistan, the Pashto are the most opposed to the education of girls). Mullah Haydar was killed and the survivors fled to the mountains, disappointed at the lack of reaction among the population. The large landowners were absent from the struggle (probably having already fled to the city or even Iran). The insurgents had no political connection; it was a spontaneous revolt such as we have previously described, except that it failed. Villagers who went underground witnessed with astonishment the general uprising three weeks later and as soon as they returned to the village, were immediately elected to the "committee." The first three "directors" of the committee were killed in the fighting and the committee suffered 37 dead from 1979 to 1982, a very large figure for a village.

## 2. The Situation in Herat

The region of Herat had few Khalqis communists, a few active Parchamis, including General Qader, from the Zuri qawm in Barnabad, a large Maoist group and finally, as we have seen, a large Jamiat-i Islami base. The Jamiat leaders, well-known to the police, generally fled to Iran (where some had been since 1974). The Mashhad office of the Jamiat was active, although connections with the budding Iranian revolution were very loose. The agrarian reform took place at the beginning of 1979, at least in the Herat plain. It was quite favorably welcomed: It is a region of large landowners mainly absent and the sharecroppers felt no solidarity with them. On the other hand, the influence of the local ulema has remained very strong in the population. Finally, Herat is a rich region with a strong cultural tradition.

The organized opposition to the regime was based on two pillars: the Jamiat-i Islami network, made up of low-level officers, ulema and young teachers or students at the government madrasa. Rabbani's personal prestige was great in the Herat region and many people leaving to seek aid in Mashhad or Pakistan joined him, even if they had not been members of the Jamiat before (particularly true of certain Sufi murid). The second network was that of the Maoist militants, strong in the army and teaching corps (particularly the Jami lycee) (Sayyed Agha, Hafiz, Sultan, Baqi, Ahangar, Aziz), but, as always, without any use among the people. The Shiite network remains misunderstood. It has

often been said that Herat was a Shiite city, but the city has a maximum of 20 percent Shiites and, except for a few villages near Ghoryan, the rural areas are Sunnite. No Iranian would participate in the fighting, contrary to what the regime tried to make people believe. Our 1982 survey shows that the Shiites organized after the uprising on the basis of a very militant group headed by a young layman (Qari Yekdast, "One Arm") following the model of the Pasdarans. The traditional Shiite clergy had fled to Iran.

### 3. The Uprising

A month before the uprising of 24 hut1357 (16 March 1979), several dozen Jamiat-i Islami members sneaked back into the country from Iran. They had an approximate plan for a revolt, even if the date was not set. They were in contact with officers from the division stationed in Herat, underground members of the Jamiat: They were captains (including Ismael Khan, Ala'uddin Khan and Abdul Ahad). The uprising began on the morning of 24 Hut, in the villages of the Herat oasis. The communist cadres, especially the teachers, were slaughtered. The uprising became massive. Peasants questioned 3 years later described it as spontaneous, but the connection between the Jamiat members and the mawlawi who preached in the mosques the night before has been established.

The villagers converged on the city, which rose up in turn. The communist cadres and dozens of Soviet advisers with their families were killed (other foreigners were spared). The next day, the army revolted and the captains took over leadership of the uprising. On the evening of 25 Hut (17 March), the entire city was in the hands of the rebels, who would keep power for a week. At the end of this time, a government armored column appeared on the Kandahar road brandishing the Koran and a green flag (an old ruse, well-known in Muslim history). The resistance staff, convinced that the general uprising, joined with the mutiny of the troops, would spread throughout the country, gave the order to allow the column to pass. The latter, supported by planes, some directly from the USSR, retook the city. Losses among the population were enormous (from 5,000 to 25,000 dead). Beaten, the resistance abandoned its heavy weapons and returned to the surrounding mountains (Kuh-e Doshakh), from which they would hold the underground until the Soviet invasion. They would then resume in the plains on that occasion (other units, loyal so far, deserted).

The general uprising was simultaneous throughout Herat Province. The uluswali of Ghoryan and Obe were taken (one leader of the Cheshtiyya brotherhood, Khalifa Sayyed Mohammad, died) but the Chesht and Pashtunzarghun posts resisted.

The uprising in the bordering Farah Province took place on 13 March (before Herat, but the precise dates are uncertain). The resistance took Khak-e Safed, Anardarra, Gulestan, Pasaband, Purchaman; the Qala-i Kah uluswali resisted. And yet, given the communications difficulties, ethnic and political differences and the absence of any base of young Islamists, this uprising, led by local notables, does not seem to have been organically linked to the Herat revolt. The coincidence of the dates is troubling, but the structure

is different. The uprisings in Farah, without any mutiny or any urban revolt, correspond to the pattern of a spontaneous uprising.

Herat therefore remains an isolated case. While Kabul experienced urban uprisings (Chendawol in July 1979), military mutinies (Bala-Hissar in August) or rural uprisings on its periphery (Shamali), there would be no coordination or even any coincidence between the three.

### C. Organized Uprisings: Badakhshan and Panjshir

#### 1. Badakhshan

Following the brief revolt led by the Setam-e Melli around Jurm and Baharak, the real insurrection began in the deep south at Koranomunjan. Teacher Abdul Basir, a former student of Rabbani at the School of Theology and now the commanding officer of Yaftal, organized the uprising with Mullah Mohammed Jan. The post was taken on 13 April 1979 (22 *Amal*) and Basir went to Pakistan to meet with Rabbani. He returned with 30 men and arms. The leader of the group, Sufi Ghorban Mohammad, was both the founder of a Naqshbandi *khanqah* [place where Sufis practice spiritual exercises] in Jurm and a graduate of the School of Theology, where he belonged to the Islamist core. He was named amir of Badakhshan. The group, aided in the beginning by Nuristanis from Parun, undertook the slow ascent of the Qokcha River, instigating the villages to revolt one by one. The military detachment that held the lapis lazuli mines at Parwara surrendered. Its leader, Commander Sayyed Akbar, would be the future Jamiat military commander from Faryab Province. Two battles marked the odyssey: Shahr-e Mazar and especially Jurm, where the post was taken at the beginning of September, lost and retaken until the arrival of the Russians. In the fall, following the classic pattern according to which uprisings ran up against the confines of the solidarity spaces, every group established itself in its valley. The attack on Faizabad, capital of the province, failed, but a dozen solid local Jamiat fronts held the rest, with the exception of the posts of Jurm, Keshm, Darwaz, Baharak and Ishkashem.

#### 2. Panjshir

Since July 1978, a group of some 20 Panjshiris (with Massoud and engineer Ishaq) was fighting in Nuristan. In the spring of 1979, they thought that the situation was ripe and moved into upper Panjshir (Paryan Valley), where the population housed them and where there was no government post. The young people established a network of contacts in the lower valley, through the ulema, including Mawlawi Mirajuddin of Astana, trained at Deoband. On 6 July, the government post was taken and the valley was soon entirely freed. The people of the Jamiat allied themselves in the beginning with a few old Maoists of the lower valley, led by Anwar Pahlawan, who rallied to the government troops in 1980 and were eliminated. The Panjshir adventure therefore began with the small march of a handful of guerrillas, who had been underground for 5 years.

The areas where the uprising was organized are therefore Jamiat-i Islami zones. Curiously enough, the Hazb-i Islami bastions (Laghman, Ghorband,



Baghlan), which also had a network of young underground activists, remained calm and only revolted after the Soviet invasion. Knowing the determination and discipline of Gulbuddin's men, one must see this passivity as the effect of a precise watchword. What was the Hezb-i Islami waiting for? As is its wont, the interpretation of Gulbuddin's policy remains problematical!

#### NOTE

1. G. Vercellin, "Afghanistan 1973-1978," pp 63-64.

#### 8. Establishment of Parties Beginning in 1979

After the insurrection, local resistance members sent delegations to Peshawar or Iran to receive weapons. These delegations made the rounds of the parties. The need to join a party was obvious: A party supplied logistical support. Commanders could hope to relieve themselves of a number of tasks (negotiating foreign aid, organizing supply networks). A party allowed for political representation with the outside world, which the mere addition of fighting fronts could not do. A party made it possible to hope to go beyond the traditional segmentation of society. In a word, a party permitted access to politics. At the same time, the ideology of the jihad, which dominated in Afghanistan at war, whatever the sociological structures, promoted the feeling of the identity and unity of the resistance. For the peasant population and the traditionalist ulema, neither of which group is motivated by the themes of Islamist ideology, the party is a means of achieving the umma. Joining is to deny factionalism and affirm oneness. However, this acceptance of the need to join a party in no way explains the choices effectively made between the different parties. Knowing the Afghans' scarce fondness for ideology, one might think that the choice of a party is made very pragmatically: One chooses the one that gives weapons. However, the map of party establishment reveals a relatively coherent distribution if one takes three criteria into consideration: the ethnic map, political opposition between Islamists and traditionalists and the existence of previously existing networks. Naturally, it is not a matter of reporting memberships in complete detail, but of introducing the coherence. Let us note that membership in parties will remain more empirical in the tribal south than in the north. It is directly linked to the type of segmentation with which we are dealing. The tribes of the south constitute more homogeneous groups, which enables them to have a more instrumental rapport with parties than in the north, where the segmentation of the qawm into largely deterritorialized networks makes the party the only way to avoid implosion.

#### A. Ethnic Map and Political Map

Three major zones can be discerned. The Pashto and tribal south is found quite massively in the so-called traditionalist parties (Harakat-i Enqelab, Gaylani and Mojaddidi). The choice of one of these parties has to do with a third criterion: the networks. This arc-shaped area runs from Farah (in the west) as far as the Kunar Valley in the northeast. Shiite central Hazara naturally belongs to the Shiite parties, whose representatives would be based

in Quetta and not Peshawar. The Persian-speaking or Turkish-speaking north would be predominantly Islamist and, more precisely, Jamiat-i Islami. However, the influence of the Harakat-i Enqelab was strong there during the first 3 years of the war, declining later.

This triple partition would be a constant of the resistance. On a more detailed level, one can see that the Hezb-Islami pockets of Hekmatyar in the northeast copies almost exactly the establishment of the Pashto transplanted since the 19th century (Baghlan, Ghorband). In Badghis, the Pashto are Harakat and the Tajiks Jamiat. The nomads and Baluchis follow the traditionalists. The Nuristanis are divided between the two groups on sociopolitical criteria (traditionalist notables and fundamentalist mullahs). Finally, in the western region of the country, it is not so much the ethnic difference that enters into play (Pashto against Tajiks), but the linguistic difference. The Persian-speaking Nurzay (west of a Shindand-Farah line) are Jamiat, while the Pashto-speaking Nurzay (in the east) are Harakat-i Enqelab. However, we know that the notion of identity is more a cultural than ethnic reference.

As for the Hezb-i Islami of Khales, it was in the beginning but a regional split from the party of Hekmatyar. The Khugiani tribe (of Nangrahar), largely detribalized, the Pashto of southern Kabul and those of Paktya combined with Khales jihad and tribal loyalty. Passage from the tribal zones in the strict sense, such as Paktya, to the still Pashto-speaking but not tribal zones (Shamali), is gradual and it is in that space that one finds the greatest political fragmentation.

The influence of Islamism is specific in the north and the central region. It is also found in Sunnite milieus (Tajik with the Jamiat, Pashto with the Hezb-i Islami) as well as Shiite circles (with the Nasr, the Sepah and the Harakat-i Islami). As we saw at the beginning of this book, this can be explained by a greater symbiosis between the clergy and the people and by the weakness of the nationalist ideology. The Islam of the north, which confronts neither common law nor specific institutions, is more intellectual and cultivated than that in the south. The prestige of the ulema has pushed more young people toward religious studies. The old Persian literature, that of Khorassan, is very much alive and strengthens the prestige of a universalist Muslim culture to the detriment of secular ideologies. The Sufi brotherhoods, strictly orthodox in the north, defend a pure, unyielding Islam, tempered by their spiritualism, and supply many ulema. Lacking common law, the peasant expects the sharia to provide protection against injustice. Finally, the young people who became radical on the campuses could not be attracted by nationalism (the trait of the Pashto) or Soviet communism, the conqueror of Bukhara and Samarkand, and whose emulators are also Pashto. Islamism would therefore take hold through the old universalist fundamentalism of the ulema and the political radicalization of the young students in the north in contact with modern Islamist literature from Egypt, Iran and Pakistan.

This distribution naturally reveals nuances and exceptions. In the south, one finds large Islamist groups (especially Hezb-i Islami), particularly around Ghazni, Zabul, Hilmand. The establishment of the Hekmatyar groups is a transtribal phenomenon, mainly Pashto, and led by young people and intellectuals.

It concerns the detribalized pockets or those with heavy mixtures of tribal segments. Inversely, one finds Harakat-i Enqelab groups in great numbers in the north. These are traditional ulema networks. It is therefore definitely the question of the networks that permits a finer approach to the distribution of parties.

## B. Networks

We shall distinguish four types of networks: the Islamists, the clergy emerging from the traditional madrasa, the tribal networks and the Sufi networks. The status of each is different. With the Islamists, we have something resembling a modern party. The clergy of the madrasa weaves a network of personal ties between teachers and students, comparable in this to the Sufi network (relations between the pir and the murid). The tribal network is a network of patronage in a strategy of power, which the previous two are not. Matrimonial alliances play a considerable role in the last three networks (and also, incidentally, among the Parchami), but not among the Islamists. This notion of network is fundamental in the Afghan political game, as we have seen in the first chapter. It creates solidarities that function independently of any political plan (except in the case of the Islamists). Naturally, the networks described are not airtight. Through the Mojaddidi family, one sees the tribal, clerical and Sufi network emerge. In the north, one sees the Sufi and fundamentalist networks permeate one another. Furthermore, it is essential that the qawm of a political leader follow him, even if its members do not necessarily share his opinions.

We shall not study the communist networks.

### 1. The Islamist Network

In Chapter 4, we saw the criteria of recruitment of the Islamists (students of the university and the government madrasa). In the field, this yields the following configuration: The militants emerging from the nonreligious schools are divided up between the Jamiat and the Hezb-i Islami (with the Pashto generally joining the Hezb and the Persian-speakers the Jamiat), while the militants from the government madrasa join the Jamiat. Sufi orders in the northwest, fundamentalist by tradition, join the Jamiat, but except for the example of a few teachers belonging to the party before the war, it would appear that this rallying is a contemporary of the uprising. If there were no political network of the Jamiat in the brotherhoods (despite the membership of certain Sufis such as Sufi Ghorban from Jurm in the Jamiat), the personal prestige of Rabbani was great among the educated and the *modarres* [teacher in a madrasa].

The strong points of the Islamists are around the centers of culture in the north, meaning the cities and in the portions of rural areas traditionally linked to the cities.

#### a) The Northwest, Jamiat Bastion

Throughout this region, most members come from the government madrasa. The Jama madrasa in Herat had three professors belonging to the Jamiat (including

one close to Rabbani, Obeydullah, who would be the qazi of the resistance for Herat). One would find the young militants trained in this school as resistance leaders in the provinces of Herat (Qazi Zaher), Badghis, Farah ("Senator") and Ghor (Mawlawi Majedi, a student of Rabbani, and Mirza Jama), but the network also had officers (Ismael Khan, provincial amir), civil servants (Mohammad Ibrahim, treasurer) and teachers. The party was founded locally by a science student (Nurullah Emmat, currently No 2 man of the Jamiat in Peshawar), from a family of traditional ulema. The young militants are rarely members of a Sufi brotherhood, unlike the more elderly (particularly in Ghoryan, great Sufi center west of the city), but political power was in the hands of the young by the spring of 1979.

Another less important Islamist center revolves around the Abu-Moslem madrasa in Maymana (Kalam Khan, Sayyed Nur Mahmad, Karim Khan, who would later go to the School of Theology in Kabul), but the initiators of the movement came from the Mazar and especially Kunduz (Elyas) madrasa. In Maymana, the distinction between the Jamiat and the Hezb-i Islami is clear: The former is founded on the government madrasa and the Naqshbandi; the second on the non-religious government schools (the Hezb military leader, engineer Nassim, came from the Mazar technical school, the assistant, Zia ul-Haqq, from the Mazar teacher training school and the No 3 man, Ghaffur Jerman, is a gymnastics coach). Following the Karukh pir, the most prestigious of the entire west, the Naq'hbandi joined the Jamiat, but we do not know whether the pir joined before the war. Whatever the case, in the west, the Jamiat network established itself in milieus that were more orthodox and moderate than in Kabul.

#### b) Central Region

The Hezb and Jamiat networks resemble one another more. The leaders (Qazi Qader Imami for the Hezb, trained at the School of Theology; Jama for the Jamiat, from the Herat state madrasa) are from the same village and the same qawm (the qawm of the qazi that traditionally supplies the province with religious judges). But one finds the same constant: teachers in the Hezb, students of the government madrasa in the Jamiat. The Hezb-i Islami, with a majority, is based on a small network of teachers (concentrated around Pasa-band, with Kassim, and around Chakhcharan, with Sattar Khan, Safdar and Raz Mahmad). The leaders of the Jamiat network are trained in Herat (Majedi and Jama). In Ghor Province, membership of the population in the two Islamist parties has no ideological base. It is the personal prestige and insertion of members in traditional society that enabled them to impose their leadership. The traditional organization wins out over party structure and the parties do not even issue cards. Unlike in the rest of the country, members are often sons of local notables (such as Rabbani Ghaffuri of the Jamiat, whose father is the great leader of Daulatyar), but the Aymaq notables, who scarcely live any differently from the rest of the population, have retained leadership of civil society. The Islamist network remains superficial.

#### c) Northeast

In this region, the Islamist intellectuals, in the Jamiat as well as the Hezb, are essentially from nonreligious universities. Few ulema joined the Islamist



movement before the war and the brotherhoods are traditionalist. The Islamist networks were strong in the region of Panjshir, Mazar, Baghlan and Ghorband, as well as around Faizabad, where the Rabbani personal factor (from the village of Yaftal) plays a great role. The Islamist networks in the northeast would therefore be more radical and militant, and rivalries between the Hezb and the Jamiat all the stronger because that which distinguishes their members does not amount to very much.

The survivors of the abortive insurrection of 1975 are now the local leaders of the resistance in the northeast. At the time of the attempt, Islamists established contacts with the main ulema in the region in order to try to bring them along. A small minority followed, which one would later find in the Jamiat and the Hezb. We have seen the list of the leaders at the time. Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz and Parwan are rather Jamiat. Baghlan, Kunar and Laghman are more Hezb (Hekmatyar) and Nangrahar for Khales. With the exception of Badakhshan, very underequipped, the proportion of young educated people is high in the northeast. Politicization is therefore greater than elsewhere. The influence of the Islamists in the schools of the northeast and on students from the region is great.

## 2. Networks of Mawlawi

Very informal, the networks of the mawlawi are not as easy to discern as that of the Islamists. We have seen that the program of a traditional mawlawi consists of moving from an unknown private madrasa to another more famous one as his knowledge grows. Thus, the future mawlawi places himself under the successive authority of masters to whom he will remain attached, just as he will be linked with his colleagues. Finally, when a well-known mawlawi comes to a village, his influence naturally extends over the village mullahs, who consult him on delicate matters.

Since the partition of 1947 and the political decline of the Mojaddidi family, there has been no more geographical or political center in Afghanistan of the networks of ulema. But the networks subsist: Most of the Pashto-speaking ulema study in Jeshawar; they can be found in the tribal areas. The Ghazni madrasa will supply many cadres for the Harakat-e Enqelab, for its leader, Mohammed Nabi, taught there and in Logar. Having land in Helmand, it has acquired great influence there. The informal networks of mawlawi seem particularly strong around Kabul (Mawlawi Shafiullah) and Nangrahar (Khales), Ghazni and Gardez (Nabi, Mansur), the entire Ghilzay region and Kandahar. In the southwest, the networks are looser. In the north and in Zabul, they remain very localized and are mixed, in rural areas, with the orthodox Sufi networks.

The networks of ulema massively joined the Harakat-e Enqelab of Mohammed Nabi, giving that party an absolute majority of the Afghan resistance in the first year of the Soviet invasion. The ulema see in the Harakat an apolitical party, a kind of clerical association. Very decentralized and without any rigid structure, without political militants or ideology, the Harakat is definitely the centrist party par excellence. Supporting a return to strict application of Muslim law, but without wanting an Islamist republic, it is opposed both to the Islamists (for whom one cannot duck the question of the state) and the

royalists (laymen). However, it gets along with the former on the question of the primacy of the sharia and with the latter on compatibility of the monarchy and Islam. Fundamentalist without being Islamist, traditionalist without being secular, the Harakat is the catch-all party of the resistance.

The Harakat is organized into local fronts around a nongovernmental madrasa, under the leadership of the mawlawi, who would then take his students as cadres. One has a *jebhe-ye toleba* (front of students of religion), frequent in areas in which the scant education makes the toleba the only educated persons. In Kilimbaf (Faryab), Mawlawi Ghaffur (an Uzbek, also a Naqshbandi murid) founded the Khwaje Abdel Rauf madrasa in 1973. After that, he became the regional leader of the Harakat (then of the Jamiat). His students constitute a front of toleba in Kilimbaf, under the leadership of his assistant Damolla Ghaus. One finds such fronts in Badghis, Nimruz, Farah and Zabul.

And yet, not all the local network of ulema would join the Harakat. One finds Islamist networks in the west (Herat) and Paktya (around Jallaluddin Haqani among the Jadran). But the ulema, whatever their party, will always be determined to maintain their networks and to officialize them as *jamiat-e ulema* or *shura-ye ulema* (associations or councils of ulema) in order to preserve their independence with respect to the political resistance and in order to affirm the singleness of Islam, while maintaining horizontal and "professional" ties in their corps.

### 3. Sufi Networks

The local influence of a pir and his immediate descendants plays a greater role than membership in one of the three main orders (Naqshbandiyya, Qaderiyya, Cheshtiyya). The prestige of a brotherhood is measured more by that of recent pir than its origins. Questioned about their affiliation, disciples will respond, not with the name of the order, but with the *selsele* [chain of transmission of authority of the pir] (in Herat: the *selsele* of Khwaje Ahrar, Khwaje Mohammed Isfahani, Shaykh Namakpush, Shaykh Sabzipush, Abdurrahman Ibn Auf, and so on). The pir have a purely local influence that varies in terms of their personal prestige. But there is a hierarchy among the pir themselves and a given local pir will declare himself to be a disciple of another more prestigious one. There are consequently Sufi networks. In order to study them, let us take up the distinctions made in the chapter on Islam.

#### a) Marabout-Type Sufiism (Pashto Tribal Areas)

In the marabout-type Sufiism, the murid joined the two parties made up of their respective pir: the Islamic Front (Mahaz-i Islami) for the disciples of Sayyed Ahmed Gaylani and the National Liberation Front (Jebhe-yi Nejad-i Melli) for those of Mojaddidi. The Islamic Front is also the party of the establishment of the old regime. Even if the motivations are not the same, there is a sociological homogeneity between the two factions (royalists and disciples) since they are both from Pashto tribal areas (the establishment being rather Durrani and the murid Ghilzay). Family ties reinforce this alliance (the wife of King Amanullah has Gaylani and Mohammedzay ancestors; the wife of Ahmad Gaylani is a Mohammedzay; likewise, the Mojaddidi are

linked to the royal family through the Osman). Since "maraboutism" is opposed to the strict religious orthodoxy of the ulema, it is normal for this party to be the most opposed to the Islamists. In this context, Sufiism makes it possible to express religiosity while remainly politically secular.

#### b) Orthodox Sufiism

As we have seen, the brotherhoods of the north are very orthodox, even fundamentalist. They provide many local ulema and mullahs, especially in rural areas. Here, the network of brotherhoods and that of the madrasa permeate one another. The networks are difficult to discern at first glance because in the north, the pir have always refused to take a leading political position in the parties. A geographic distinction is essential:

The brotherhoods of the northeast (from Maymana to Pakistan) remain very traditionalistic. When they have many local ulema, they generally join the Harakat-i Enqelab, at least during the early years of the war (the case of the Naq'hbandi murid of Maymana, Mawlawi Ghaffur, killed by the Hezb-i Islami shortly after he went over to the Jamiat in July 1983). When they have mainly educated members (older teachers, merchants), they sometimes join the Mojaddidi Front (in Koh-i Safi, under the leadership of Mohammed Akbar). Throughout the north, the brotherhoods encounter the hostility of the Hezb-i Islami, which considers their form of religiosity as contrary to Islam. And yet, the local pir have either disappeared or emigrated and their personal influence has weakened. But the brotherhoods went over to the resistance with their networks. The main Sufi center is Qunduz, whose Naqshbandi pir, Akhundzade Sayfurrahman, now in Pakistan, is extending his influence as far as Maymana (he is linked with the Harakat, the Jamiat and Mojaddidi). Significantly, the only pir which to my knowledge has rallied to Gaylani, Khalifa Yousouf of Darrah-ye Zang (Faryab), was not followed by his disciples (Jamiat), confirming that Gaylani's maraboutism is limited to the tribal areas. Likewise, many local Naqshbandi brotherhoods, historically linked to the Mojaddidi family, have not rallied to the National Liberation Front of Sebgatullah Mojaddidi, believing that the latter, although the only survivor of the family, is not a pir, which confirms the difference in membership between the murid of the north and those of the south, who are more influenced by a magical type of relationship (and therefore, transmittible hereditarily). We have previously encountered a Naqshbandi pir belonging to the Jamiat since its creation: Sufi Ghorban Mohammed of Jurm was initiated by pir Mohammed Bashir of Balkh, who would come to inaugurate the khanaqah of his murid in Jurm. A former fellow student of Rabbani, he was the first amir of the Jamiat in Badakhshan.

The brotherhoods of the west and the Aymaqs went over to the Jamiat en masse, even, in some cases, to the Hezb-Islami. The main Sufi center is Karukh, with Khalifa Sharafatuddin, but one must add the entire suburb of Herat (Injil, Haouz-e Kerbas) and centers such as Barnabad or Chesht-i Sharif. Of all Afghanistan, this is where Sufiism is the most alive, but it has not sought to take on its own political form. It is perhaps here that Sufism resembles the most what it is to be in Soviet Central Asia: a guardian of the orthodoxy and a spiritualism that distrusts folklore. One must add the importance of the classical literary tradition, inseparable from Sufiism, and of which Herat, the city of Jami and Ansari, is perhaps the last heir. The Sufi

structure does not seem different in Herat and throughout the north (with the orders recruiting mainly in the periurban zones, of which they supply the clergy, with the urban madrasa remaining in the hands of a more jurist and more formalist clergy). Membership in the Islamist parties undoubtedly comes from a higher cultural level of its members, which puts them in contact with the politicized intellectual milieus. Let us note that the branches that explicitly claim kinship with the Mojaddidi family (such as pir Shaykh Agha Jan in Barnabad and the pir of Kabarzan) are in the Jamiat.

One finds two other interesting networks in the west. Around the city of Chesht-i Sharif, a veritable little Sufi republic has sprung up with the Cheshtiyya brotherhood. It has all the madrasa, which have retreated to the mountains. It is headed by two pir: One, Sayyed Gol, linked with the Mohammed Nabi network, is with the Harakat-i Enqelab. The other, Sayyed Nasruddin, is in the Jamiat. Significantly, the latter considers that the founder of the Pakistani Islamist movement, Maududi, is a Cheshti murid, as his name indicates (after the founder of the brotherhood: Maudud al-Cheshti). The brotherhood retook the city of Chesht from the government in the winter of 1983-1984.

The second network is that of Aymaq Sufiism, centered around Purchaman, whose pir, Hazrat Saheb-e Purchaman (Hajji Baha'uddin Jan, killed under Taraki), dominated a series of "itinerant pir" who, with his investiture (*ejaze*), circulated throughout Aymaq country as far as Maymana. Although these brotherhoods are less spiritualist and more "magical" than those of Herat, they have joined the Islamist parties, especially Jamiat, but one finds a Hezb-i Islami brotherhood in Hashtomin ("the eighth," a clear reference to a *selsele*) in Faryab, under the spiritual leadership of itinerant pir Abdurrahman Jan, from Purchaman, and locally led by pir Shah Mahmud Jan. As always among the Sufis of the north, the pir declined political power, here in the hands of murid Mawlawi Din Mahmud. In Hashtomin and Chesht, the murid refer to themselves as *qawm* of sayyad. The Aymaq country poses an interesting problem, because the political affiliation of the population came about under the influence of two very different groups that ignored one another: the little network of teachers from Chakhcharan and the pir from Purchaman. The result is a dominant influence of the Hezb and the Jamiat.

Finally, in the south, one also finds orthodox-type brotherhoods. For example, in Zabul, two pir head networks of *toleba* formed from their respective madrasa. In Daychopan, it is Akhundzade Saheb Mobarak (Siman madrasa) and in Shinki, Hajji Abdul Malek Agha, active in Kandahar (in Zaker). The first to rebel, their murid set up formidable *jabha-ye toleba* (fronts of theology students), like that of Mizan. The entire Harakat organization in Zabul (led by Mawlawi Khyaz ul Haqq Haqani) is based on this Sufi and clerical network. The non-clerical Sufis join the Gaylani party if they are Qaderi and Mojaddidi if they are Naqshbandi. The general rule for all Afghanistan is therefore that a local pir only follows the leader of his order (Mojaddidi or Gaylani) politically if he is not himself an alim. Otherwise, he goes to the Jamiat or the Harakat, very few to Khales or Hekmatyar.

In war, the pir are rarely military leaders (except for the Cheshti). In contrast, the Sufis have the local committees in the periurban zones of the



north, particularly in Herat and Maymana. In Herat, the committees of Injil (with Sufi Ghaffur, assassinated in 1983), Haouz-e Kerbas (Abdullah), Karukh, Ghoryan (Khwahe Zabiullah) are held by the murid, with the pir generally having emigrated to Iran. In Maymana, the Jamiat and Harakat fronts revolve around Naqshbandi madrasa: Lawlash Myandarrah (with Mawlawi Youssouf, nephew of the current pir, Shamsuddin), Kilimbaf. Memberships in the brotherhoods transcend political affiliations. Thus, in Maymana, the Hezb-i Islami groups belonging to the brotherhoods form an alliance with the Jamiat (as in the case of engineer Mohammad Ullah of Almar), while the Hezb groups with no Sufi affiliation wage a bloody war against the Jamiat and the Harakat. Locally speaking, the brotherhoods are a factor of union and coordination, even if they do not play any role in Peshawar. The soldiers in groups springing from local khanaqa are solid and disciplined, long accustomed to obeying the pir and knowing one another perfectly. They are generally older and more mature than the usual mujahidin. If the brotherhoods get along well with moderate Islamism, however, they are very opposed to Wahhabism or radical Islamism and therefore, by extension, to parties such as the Hezb-i Islami or the Sayyaf Alliance.

The brotherhoods have all gone over to the resistance because they were the target of extremely harsh repression under the Taraki-Amin regime (massacre of the Mojaddidi family and the pir of Purchaman, the forced exile of the pir of Herat and Tagao, arrests of murid nearly everywhere, the arrest of 300 members of the Cheshtiyia in the fall of 1978, whom no one would ever see again, and so on). If the brotherhoods are not the political spearhead of the resistance, they nevertheless constitute, in the north, the most solid network of the resistance on the local level, which enables us to confirm, by induction, the role of the brotherhoods in the parallel Islam in Soviet Turkestan, which must scarcely differ from their sisters in northern Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Tribal Networks

The tribal networks have two aspects: the establishment of the old regime, of Durrani but mainly urban origin, and the local tribal notables. Since most of the establishment came from the great Durrani tribal federation that took power in 1747, these two networks of the same origin would be connected by matrimonial and political alliances. The establishment would be joined by the great urban families not directly springing from the tribes (such as the Mojaddidi and the Gaylani) and from non-Durrani but generally tribal provincial notables (Baluchi Sanjarani, Ghilzay of Nimruz, Babrakzay of Paktya, and so on). It would be too tedious to reconstitute this network in detail,<sup>2</sup> especially since it scarcely plays any role in Kabul. Its two strong points are now in emigration and the tribes, especially the Durrani, where it must compete with the ulema of the Harakat-i Enqelab, with whom it does not generally maintain matrimonial alliances. Whatever the case, the tribal networks are royalist and constitute the essential portion of the Mahaz-e Islami or, to a lesser extent, Mojaddidi's Liberation Front. It is not surprising that their strong points should be in the tribes that are the cradle of the monarchy: the Popolzay around Kandahar (with the Karzay family, whose current leader, Abdul Ahad Karzay, was a UN representative in 1972).

Nevertheless, the absence of great families in the interior resistance is a striking phenomenon. One can already say that the tribal aristocracy has lost political power in Kabul and the resistance, although one does find in the tribal networks a few Parchami, such as Shahpur Ahmedzay (chief of staff), killed by the Khalq, Suleyman Laeq (minister of communications under Taraki) and Zia Mohammedzay Zya, chief of Daoud's bodyguards in 1973.

In the field, tribal leaders are generally replaced by traditionalist mawlawi of the Harakat-e Enqelab or of Khales. It is only in the powerful tribe of the Ahmedzay of Logar that old leaders remained in the field (such as Senator Ahmedzay Gholam Saqqi or the malek of Deoband, who belong to Gaylani's party). The only family that has retained its prestige is the Karzay family, recognized as a leader by the Popolzay, even when local committees join other parties than that of Mojaddidi.

We have seen that the khan exists only within the framework of competition with his peers, which is why it is very difficult for them to constitute a party. Even when the local khan join the same party, they carry their rivalries over to the party. Such is the case with the Wardak, in which rivalries between cousins led to the establishment of dozens of fronts and local committees claiming to follow Gaylani, although only one is effective (that of Amin Wardak). Likewise, in the Hazarajat, the Shiite arbab, who held economic power, have been replaced politically by the traditional clergy (sayyad) and the Khomeyniites, having been unable to come to any agreement among themselves. The parties emerging from tribal networks are therefore clubs in which patronage and personal relationships prevail. Their political and military effectiveness is poor. Abroad, they essentially group members of the royal family.

#### NOTES

1. See the analyses of A. Bennigsen and C. Lemerrier-Quelquejay, "The Forgotten Muslims," 1981, p 231 and the following.
2. See L. Adamec, "Who's Who in Afghanistan," 1975.
9. Parties in Peshawar After the Soviet Invasion: Unity and Disunity

At the time of the Soviet invasion of 27 December 1979, two-thirds of the country had already gone over to the opposition. Amin's regime was on the brink of collapse. The invasion had two effects on the resistance: Regions and groups that had not yet rebelled went over to the opposition (especially the intellectual bourgeoisie, the officers, Pashto in the north and former Maoists, with the exception of the Setam-e Melli). The parties in Peshawar, previously in the embryonic stage (except for the Jamiat and the Hezb-Islami), would see their role increase.

## 1. Expansion of Resistance to Entire Territory

If the Soviet invasion encountered no armed opposition the first month, it was because its objective was not the rebel rural areas, but rather, the government army and the regime.<sup>1</sup> For two months, the winter and the shock of the invasion, combined with the establishment of the new regime and the much lower profile of the repression, anesthetized reaction. And yet, Babrak's regime was definitely perceived as the tool of the Soviets and a strongly nationalistic reaction roused previously massive milieus. In the cities, first of all: In Kabul, there were massive, bloody protests on 21 and 22 February, then in May. These demonstrations were prompted by students, male and female, grouping all factions, but a particularly active role was played by the former Maoists, well-acquainted with militancy and organized in the SAMA. More generally, the educated petty bourgeoisie in the capital, previously passive, went over to the opposition. But this urban opposition declined after 1980, lacking any effective underground organization. Many civil servants then left the country.

In the provinces, the entire country went over to the resistance, with the exception of pockets of partisans of the regime which we described in Chapter 6. In the northeastern quarter, the Pashto zones generally rebelled with the Hezb-Islami (Ghorband, Baghlan). In Shamali, the plain just north of Kabul, French newsmen were taken by the SAMA to Farza and Istalif.<sup>2</sup> At the other end of the country, the Nimruz front started to attack government border posts. The few areas in which the leftists were influential rose up after the Soviet invasion (except for the Setam-e Melli, which would demonstrate the reverse attitude: highly anti-Khalq, they would fight against the regime in 1979, but would join the Parcham in 1980). Finally, Kandahar, the country's No 2 city, rebelled.

At the same time, a wave of desertions shook the army, particularly the officers corps. Relatively loyal as long as they were working for an Afghan government -- being more nationalist than Islamist -- they refused to accept the invasion and especially being advised by arrogant Soviet officers. The Ghazni garrison mutinied in May. Henceforth, throughout the country, one would only be able to circulate on paved roads and in convoys escorted by armored vehicles.

The Soviet invasion would not only couple the anticommunist revolt with a nationalist faction, but would also cause thousands of old and new opponents to join the underground. The old opponents were surviving political prisoners whom the regime had released in February 1980, while the new were mainly military men, who went over to the resistance with arms and equipment. The dissident civil servants and officers generally did not go underground, but went into exile, along with members of the establishment still in Kabul. A few rare officers deserted and went underground (Aref in Herat, Omar in Paktya).

By February, the Soviets undertook their first direct operations against the resistance. There was the offensive on Kunar in February 1980, then in Badakhshan, Panjshir, Baghlan, Takhar and Ghazni. It was mainly a matter of clearing the main roads. The classic repression-uprising cycle had begun.

## 2. Constitution of Political Parties in Exile

The beginnings of the political parties before the Soviet invasion remain fairly obscure. We have seen that the Hezb-i Islami (and its split headed by Khales) and the Jamiat-i Islami already had offices and an organization well before the communist coup. But these parties, very marked ideologically, were not ready to integrate the mass of soldiers coming to seek arms or a mere organized structure without political conditions, especially since too strict of an organization is repugnant to Afghans. Furthermore, certain political or religious personalities, now in exile, hesitated to join parties they did not lead. One can therefore discern three possible scenarios which will be evident throughout the history of the resistance parties:

A multiplicity of loosely structured parties or even local fronts, corresponding to the segmentation of Afghan society and the rivalries of potential leaders and their followings. This multiplicity could be made into a somewhat loose coalition; they are the so-called "moderate" parties.

A dominant party, but one that largely renounces its own character in order to integrate people not ideologically won over from the beginning. This is the Jamiat-i Islami.

A very homogeneous party of the Leninist type, using the "united front" policy in order to exclude and divide other parties so as to recruit new members, if need be, through "rump factions": Such is the case of the Hezb-i Islami of Hekmatyar.

The problem of the "Union" would be the dominant question of political life in Peshawar. It is a question posed both by Afghans and their foreign supporters, with vacillation between a great ineffective ecumenical rally and suicidal splits. There are two reasons for this: the myth of the necessary consensus among believers, which pushes for the worst compromise, especially when there is pressure from religious circles, whether or not autochthonous; and the absence of a political space transcending the interplay of the qawm. The leaders and their partisans had difficulty distinguishing party from the network of patronage, especially since property (weapons) were circulating, traditionally at stake in local power struggles.

The parties were the victims of the same malady that undermined the Afghan state and the government in Kabul: interference by the qawm. This perception of the political as an interplay of networks of personal ties explains the process of constituting parties in Peshawar, through an alternating union and segmentation. The president of a coalition would transform it into a new party, which would join those making up the coalition in question. By June 1978, the Jebhe-ye Nejad-e Melli (Front of National Salvation) had been set up. By the fall, Sebghatullah Mojaddidi had been elected president and Tawana, Rabbani's deputy, secretary. But Mojaddidi very quickly made the front a party like the others and Rabbani left it. Another attempt, this one involving Hekmatyar, resulted in the creation of the Harakat-i Enqelab-i Islami (Islamist Revolutionary Movement), one of the names used by Islamists in the 1960's. This front was originally very broad and headed by Mohammed Nabi Mohammedi, a traditionalist mawlawi and former deputy. According to certain



sources, Nabi was chosen at the prompting of Hekmatyar, who hoped to turn him into a figurehead. But he took the Harakat in hand, even allying with old Maoists in order to affirm his power.<sup>3</sup> The process was repeated with Sayyaf, elected president of a broad coalition in 1980.

In Peshawar as at home, the Soviet invasion constituted a clean break. Until the invasion, the parties more or less vegetated because they received scarcely any outside aid. The Jamiat tried to develop a countercoup backed by a popular uprising, which succeeded only in Herat. But the Jamiat remained the most active party inside the country during this period. The Hezb-i Islami bet on a longer-term strategy, strengthening its domestic networks while avoiding their exposure. It gave no order to rebel and developed its international connections with Iran and fundamentalist circles in the Persian Gulf. The split with Khaless took place in 1979, for the latter was much more concerned about concrete action in the field and involved in the uprising in Paktya and Nangrahar. Mojaddidi and Gaylani, who arrived in Peshawar in the winter of 1978-1979, slowly formed a base, especially through the border tribal networks. Once head of the Harakat, Nabi essentially worked to regroup the traditionalist clergy. All of these parties could only ship small quantities of weapons, often purchased at the famous Pakistani bazaar of Darrah. And yet, at the time of the Soviet invasion, the political background to the resistance was already in place. The six parties of Peshawar<sup>4</sup> had been set up with characteristics that would scarcely change, along with the three main Shiite parties. The existence and importance of the splinter groups (Maoist or Shiite) are more difficult to evaluate at this time.

### 3. The Soviet Invasion and Western Perception of Peshawar Parties

The invasion would completely change Western perspective on the Peshawar parties. Previously ignored, they would become necessary relays for reaching the internal resistance and were considered as an asset of prime importance in order to hurt the USSR on the international scene. Only two elements were important: the war in the field and diplomacy. Neither the party structure nor their social base nor their ideology would interest Westerners, who would have a purely pragmatic and instrumental view of the parties, whence the main debacles that followed. Very rapidly, a decision to give concrete aid to the resistance was made in Washington, Cairo and Riyadh. Concrete, empirical, cautious aid in the field came through the Pakistani Government, which would be careful not to dump too many weapons at home. Regarding the diplomatic scene, if not an Arafat, then at least a PLO was needed. One would therefore seek to impose an alliance, however artificial, at any cost, using a form of blackmail that would remain a constant: If you want help, first unite!

Within such a policy, there was little room for ideological choices. Naturally, the United States and Egypt preferred moderates such as Mojaddidi and Gaylani, while Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were closer to the fundamentalists. But except for certain religious circles, such as the Pakistani Jama'at Party or the Muslim Brotherhoods of the Gulf, the governments acted in terms of what they perceived as their strategic interests.

Immediately, Pakistan's attitude was in the background with respect to the Westerners on two fundamental points: weapons and unity. Pakistan, whose new military power remained fragile, could not appear as a mere American relay station, especially since, following the affair in Iran (and later, Lebanon), American support seemed to be highly contingent. While the Pakistanis did authorize the shipment of arms, they imposed a quantitative and qualitative limit: One could not exceed a certain caliber (14.5 for machine guns and 82 mm for mortars), as well as a certain technological threshold (no missiles, no sophisticated weapons). On the political level, the Pakistanis were bothered by the fear of a Palestinization of a resistance backed by millions of refugees. Continuation of a certain division of the resistance seemed to them to be the best protection against such a risk. The Pakistanis granted the same facilities to the six groups and closed their eyes to the activities of splinter groups they did not recognize. It was they who froze the two alliances, at least until 1984.

On the other hand, the Americans and Saudis would make unity the key to a diplomatic offensive against the USSR. Their emphasis on the diplomatic aspect stemmed less from hope of a settlement than a pessimistic view of the military situation causing them to counter the USSR on another level. They would act in two phases: imposing a general union and then, in the face of failure, trying to institutionalize the two unions.

#### 4. The Unions From 1980 to 1984

In January 1980, on the occasion of the Islamic Conference in Lahore, the six parties of Peshawar, at Rabbani's urging, agreed to form a union before March. But when the deadline came, the Hezb- Islami of Hekmatyar refused to join it. On 19 March, an alliance of the five was proclaimed: Sayyaf, a former member of the Muslim Youth, from the Kharrut tribe like Hekmatyar and Hafizullah Amin and recently freed from Pul-i Charkhi prison, was elected president, with Mojaddidi as vice president. There was a double reason for Sayyaf's choice: Emerging from prison and independent, he was a new man little likely to favor a party. A former assistant in the School of Theology, having studied in Cairo and Saudi Arabia and speaking Arabic perfectly, he was an excellent middleman for convincing the Saudis and the people of the Gulf, the source of both money and diplomatic support. But the choice soon turned out to be catastrophic: Ambitious and without many scruples, Sayyaf would always work to turn the alliance into his own personal party. Initially, he would ally himself with Hekmatyar in order to impose a break with the moderates and exclude Rabbani and Khaled from the alliance, then would turn against Hekmatyar by creating a split within the Hezb-i Islami. Money would play a great role in his policies. He kept the treasury after the breakup of the alliance, had Saudi subsidies paid to him in his name and literally bought off groups of soldiers coming to Peshawar to seek arms, giving them what they wanted in exchange for nominal allegiance.

This alliance of the five would never function. From that time on, the Afghan resistance would be polarized in two directions: Islamism and royalism. This polarization, as we have seen, corresponded to a split in the field, but a split more sociological and ethnic than ideological, inasmuch as the Harakat, mainly made up of fundamentalist ulema by definition but recruiting in tribal

areas, would join the royalist pole. By royalism, one should understand a desire for a return to an old regime guaranteeing a certain separation between religion and politics (but one must not forget that for the ulema, civil and penal law are part of religion). What is at stake in politics is simply the form of the regime and the person of the sovereign. They can therefore want the sharia in rural areas and a king in the city.

Each of the two poles had its "extremists": Gulbuddin Hekmatyar for the Islamists and the last remnant of the tribal aristocracy for the royalists. The radical Islamists looked with horror upon the secularism of the royal regime, identified with impiety and made responsible for the Soviet penetration. Inversely, the aristocrats scorned the Islamist cadres, spring from modest families and generally without any tribal attachments: "No one knows his father," is a formula often used to disqualify an Islamist leader! But if one excludes the two extremes, the differences are only attenuated between the most centrist parties of the two camps (of which Rabbani and Mojaddidi were the two main figures). Alliances followed two contradictory dynamics: in Peshawar, a polarization at the extremes; at home, a coalition at the center which in fact corresponded to the natural unwieldiness of the resistance. Foreign (Saudi and Pakistani) influence would result in an encouragement of the polarization at the two extremes. Until 1984, the Shiite parties would not be seriously solicited to join the alliances, which explains why we deal with them separately.

Following the failure of the alliance of the five, two alliances were set up in April 1981. It is difficult to reconstitute what happened in the corridors. It would appear that the action of Hekmatyar and Sayyaf was decisive. An assembly of ulema in Peshawar brought together all political leaders and announced that they would not leave until a real alliance had been set up. Gaylani, sensing a trap, refused to go. After several days of confused debate, an "alliance of the seven" was established, grouping the three Islamist parties (Hekmatyar, Rabbani, Khales), Sayyaf and splits from the other parties, two from the Harakat (the only important one being that of Mawlawi Nasrullah Mansur, well established in Paktya at Ghazni) and one from the National Liberation Front (Mo'azen). At the same time, a moderate alliance was created, with Nabi, Mojaddidi and Gaylani. This alliance would be more stable but have less of a base at home.

The political scene would therefore remain constant until 1984. The Islamist alliance would have only an outward unity. On the one hand, Rabbani and Khales still dreamed of a more general united front, but Saudi backers denied them any opening. On the other hand, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Sayyaf, initially united in order to eliminate the others, began a struggle to the death in 1983.

##### 5. Royalist Maneuvers

Along with the constitution of the alliances, certain royalist milieus, secretly encouraged by Gaylani, played the card of the jirga, meaning the mode of traditional legitimization of the Afghan sovereigns. Officially speaking, this operation was presented as an attempt to set up a democratic parliament,

but the concrete mode of the choice (cooptation among the tribal elites) as well as the sociological and historic context of the reference to the jirga (which refers to tribal institutions and a recent history in which national jirga have always been a form of a posteriori legitimization of a tribal military victory), make these jirga a final attempt of a declining aristocracy to oppose the rise of a government, Islamist in the north and clerical in the south, framing their legitimacy in the name of Muslim egalitarianism. Furthermore, in the moderate alliance, only Gaylani and Mojaddidi would support these attempts. The Harakat, more clerical than tribal, would not move.

Three attempts took place. In the spring of 1980, at the prompting of a Jadran chief from Paktya, Omar Babrakzay, contacts were made, but the jirga was sabotaged by the Gaylani family, which felt that control was getting away from it. The most serious attempt was in the autumn of 1981. Planned for several months by a committee of notables (Waseyfi and Shamsuddin Majruh, former ministers, Abdul Qudus, Agha Jan and Mohammed Gurgich, former deputies and senators), the jirga was to be held in Quetta. It roused a certain craze in Pashto tribal circles and thousands of persons rallied to the city. But the Pakistani Government banned the meeting, which was then moved to Pishin. Taking advantage of the confusion, a group circulated a petition demanding the return of King Zaher. The jirga turned into confusion.

This scenario would be a constant. Behind the sometimes sincere claim of rallying a kind of national assembly, all the jirga would be the screens for the tribal aristocracy and therefore doomed to failure. Actually, the establishment of the old regime has always remained very cut off from peasant uprisings. The more time that goes by, the less it has understood the Afghan resistance. Sociological changes in the resistance in both tribal and non-tribal zones reinforce this exclusion. The establishment learned nothing, but forgot nothing. It wanted to return to precisely the former situation. Its nightmare was more Bacha-ve Saqqao than communism and it far preferred an agreement with the Soviet to a recognition of a new leadership in the country.

In 1983-1984, one again witnessed the reappearance of the jirga scenario, following an appeal from the king.<sup>5</sup> But nothing indicated that the scenario had changed, even if it was more subtle in form. Nothing was done to integrate the internal resistance or the parties. The royalist solution would have meaning only if the king came equipped with an acceptable agreement concluded with the Soviets. Such was not the case. Subsequently, the king himself would refuse to be identified with the nationalist alliance alone.

The vicissitudes of union show that negation of the political aspect, which constitutes the entire dialectic of power in traditional society, remains very strong in the parties. The problem of unity among the ulema is based on an ecumenism denying the need for political structures. Among Islamists, this same set of problems suppresses the continued existence of patronage. In both cases, tension is great between union rhetoric, reinforced by reference to the umma, and real practices. Even the establishment of a flexible coalition is a problem because instead of building relations on an objective appreciation of ratios of strength and the real interest of each party, most



leaders would have a symbolic relationship to power as well as to military problems: Questions of precedence would be more important than those of a real sharing of power and weapons as well as money would be more a symbol of power than a means of making war, given the fact that the power of interest to the leaders is not that of a bank account in Switzerland or any ostentatious wealth, but power from distribution and the recognition of others. At least this is the relationship to power that one finds among Sayyrf and the moderates. Rabbani and Khaless escaped it (along with Hekmatyar, who has other goals), but they cannot avoid being perceived in reference to it.

#### NOTES

1. A. Arnold, "Afghanistan, the Soviet Invasion in Perspective," 1981; O. Roy, "The Soviet Army in Afghanistan," in PASSE PRESENT, No 1, 1982.
2. Report by P. Blanchet in LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR, No 791.
3. One finds the Harakat-i Enqelab claimed as a "leftist" party in numerous publications in 1980, and in "Movement of Support for the Afghan Resistance," June 1980, p 18.
4. See the appendix for a synthetic table.
5. Published in LE MONDE of 22 June 1983.
10. Evolution of Establishment of Parties, 1980-1984
  - A. Party Map in 1980

The distribution of parties did not come about by accident, but rather, following a rather precise system. One has but to determine the map showing the establishment of the parties and their relative strength. Obviously, field surveys are nearly nonexistent for the period and we must proceed to complete a reconstruction.<sup>1</sup> In the beginning, only the members of the Hezb and the Jamiat referred to the notion of party. The Hezb and the Jamiat therefore became established based on their networks of members, but without controlling the population in a hegemonic way. The people follow the local leaders, who make their choice based on the four previously described networks, whence the great diversity, combined with a certain mobility of allegiances. The segmentation of affiliations and the simultaneous presence of numerous parties in the same place is a feature of the beginning of the war. And yet, one can say that in the south, the segmentation is not as strong in the beginning, although it remains a constant, while the north, more segmented in 1980, will experience a process of regrouping and clarification.

In 1980, the leading party was unquestionably the Harakat-i enqelab-i islami (Islamic Revolutionary Movement) because its underlying network, the traditionalist *mawlawi* [in Afghanistan, an *alim*, doctor of law] of the nongovernmental *madrassa* [higher religious school], covers the entire country. It is dominant throughout the southern arc. In the north, it is in second place after the Jamiat in Herat and Badghis, but dominates from Maymana to Kunduz, meaning in the Uzbek country and the Pashto areas of the northwest, while the Tajik areas are more Jamiat. The Harakat is little represented in the central and northeastern regions.

The second-ranking party is the Jamiat. Its bastion is Badakhshan and Panjshir in the east and Herat in the west. It is essentially Tajik.

The Hezb-i islami is established in the Pashto-speaking pockets of the northeast (Baghlan, Kunduz, Laghman, Ghorband) and among the detribalized Pashto of the south (Ghazni, Helmand), as well as among part of the Aymaqs.

The establishment of the parties of Gaylani and Mojaddidi would be fragmentary but stable throughout the war. These are tribal segments (clans) whose leaders maintain a personal relationship with one of the two leaders, sometimes recognized as a pir (as in the case of the Ahmedzay with respect to Mojaddidi). Allegiance to one of these two parties is largely determined by the granting of weapons. Only Mojaddidi maintains groups in the north (generally among the murid). However, there are Gaylani groups among the Pashto nomads of the north (Taraki), which is normal, and among the Turkmen.

Nangrahar is solidly held by Khales, as is the Jadran tribe.

## B. Evolution in the Field From 1981 to 1984

### 1. Growth of the Hezb-i Islami of Khales Among the Pashto

Yunus Khales left Hekmatyar in 1979, accused of ducking combat. Khales, linked to the traditionalist mawlawi (he came out of the system of private madrasa and studied in Deoband) as well as the Islamists (he is among the initiators of the movement and played the role of propagandist when he worked for government publications), was immediately followed by his tribe, the Khugiani of Nangrahar. Paradoxically enough, his network was both political (Islamist) as well as tribal. As soon as one leaves the Khugiani to go to the Ghilzay in the west, the Laghmani in the north or the Shinwari east of Nangrahar, the influence of Khales falls dramatically. Likewise, when Jalalluddin Haqani, a Jadran from Paktya, joined Khales out of political affinity, it would be on a tribal basis that people would follow him.

Khales' party is unanimously considered as very combative, well organized by Afghan standards and strategically well situated (on the Kabul-Jellalabad road). The prestige of its leader and the quality of its commanding officers (such as Abdul Haqq) are undisputed. This party long remained regional (Nangrahar and Paktya), but starting in 1982, it made a spectacular gain in the Kandahar region, where prestigious leaders joined it (such as Mollah Malang or Obeydullah) and even in Kabul.

The tribal aspect is very marked for the front of Jallaluddin Haqani. Like Khales, the latter is from the private madrasa and completed his studies in Peshawar (*madrasa-ye haqaniyya*). He does not seem to have engaged in political activities before the war. Returning to his tribe Jadran with the coup d'etat, he ousted the officials and the khan, like the Babrakzay, thanks to his energy and military capabilities. The tribe of the Jadran is the bastion of the resistance in Paktya. However, Jallaluddin could not or did not seek to expand outside of the tribal space. A Pashto often prefers a leader outside of his system rather than rallying to one too close to him. The other tribes (Jaji, Mangal, Tani, Waziri) immediately became more docile, either following Gaylani (and the Jamiat for the Waziri). Here, the tribal interplay, while it maintains the homogeneity of the tribes, prevents the expansion of a political model outside of the tribe that preaches it. But it is definitely through Khales' party that Islamism can hope to gain a foothold among the tribes.

## 2. Decline of the Harakat

This phenomenon is the most important development of the first 4 years of the war. The Harakat was the majority party in 1980, but beginning in 1981, the largest share of the local Harakat committees in Herat and Faryab provinces, as well as those in the Persian-speaking area of Farah Province, joined the Jamiat-i islami. In this transfer, one notes a linguistic aspect. In Farah, the Persian-speaking Nurzay joined the Jamiat, while the Pashto remained with the Harakat. The same is true of the Badghis and the Faryab. Tajiks and Uzbeks changed allegiances, while the Pashto pockets won over by the Harakat (including many *jebhe-ye toleba*, front of theology students) remained with it. The non-Pashto blamed the Peshawar leadership for favoring Pashto members in the distribution of weapons, but there are deeper causes, especially in the west.

Movement to the Jamiat at the end of 1981 in Herat Province and Farah was the direct result of the "Shir Agha affair." As we have seen, the Harakat, based on the network of traditionalist mawlawi, always favored the emergence of horizontal interparty structures, often named *jamiat-e ulema* (ulema societies). This organization was set up in Herat by Gholam Maheddin, a pir from Obe. The real leader was Shir Agha from the city of Herat. At the same time, the regional Maoists, numerous but unable to act openly, decided to use the *jamiat-e ulema* as a front.<sup>2</sup> Clashes were immediate between infiltrated Maoists and the Jamiat, for they were already pitted against one another in the schools during the time of the king, while the mawlawi viewed the Maoists as nothing more than willing intellectuals. There were deaths. At the beginning of 1981, Shir Agha openly went over to the government with his entire *qawm*, which until today has constituted the most combative militia of the west. Most of the Harakat committees in the province joined the Jamiat. In addition to Shir Agha's *qawm*, certain Harakat groups near the Iranian border, manifestly infiltrated by the Maoists but acting under other names (*ansarullah*), fought for the government. The Obe pir and the antigovernmental Maoists then went into Iran.

Shir Agha's betrayal and the Maoist infiltration illustrate the fundamental weakness of the Harakat. It is an "intertebate" party, a mere juxtaposition of local fronts revolving around mawlawi without any political experience. It is therefore normal for the Harakat to be the privileged target of attempts at infiltration, whether by Maoists or opportunists such as Shir Agha, who try to raise the stakes in order to negotiate their defection.

The weakness of the central leadership, incapable of imposing control over its members, and the very traditional mode of distributing arms (commanding officers must go get their lots themselves) are in contradiction with the only thing that a party structure could have given to people somewhat reticent over the very idea of party, to wit, logistics and a minimum of controls. And yet, it is because its members found in the Harakat the opposite of a party that they initially joined it. But war requires politicization and organization that do not fit in with the rejection of political aspects characteristic of Afghan civil society.

The Harakat retains its strength in the south because the tribal nature of the local fronts corresponds to the "federative" structure of the party. The basis of a front is tribal, with the leader often being a religious figure. Furthermore, it has good regional leaders (such as Nassim Akhundzade in Helmand and Mollah Mohammed Shah in Farah). The mawlawi who knew Nabi remain loyal to him. However, although local commanding officers from Kandahar (such as Mollah Malang or Obeydullah) joined Khaless, where they would find weapons more easily. However, the shifts are not accidental here either. The orthodox Toleba and Naqshbandi, who in the north went over to the Jamiat, remained with the Harakat in the south, with Khaless' party appearing to be less favorable to Sufism than the Jamiat. Let us also note the existence of a split in the Harakat in the region of Gardez and Ghazni, under the leadership of Nasrullah Mansur, a member of the "Alliance of the Seven." Much less tribal than the other Harakat groups, Mansur's fronts were well staffed by the traditionalist clergy trained in Pakistan, highly opposed to the king. It was toward this type of front or toward Khaless that an increasingly "radical" Harakat would move, accentuating the rapprochement with the Jamiat.

### 3. Rise of the Jamiat

Two factors played a role in the rise of the Jamiat. One, static, was made up of the networks; the other, more dynamic, of the expansion of the Massoud model and of the other two commanding officers (Ismael Khan and Zabiullah).

The networks do not explain shifts from one party to the other, but they allow them. As we have seen, the Jamiat is well situated at the junction of three of the four Afghan resistance networks: the Islamists, the Sufis and the mawlawi. On the other hand, it is poorly articulated on the fourth (the tribes), which explains its difficulty in penetrating the south.

The rise of the Jamiat-i islami came about at the expense of the Harakat in the west and the Hezb-i islami in the northeast and the south. One goes from the Harakat to the Jamiat because one finds the Harakat too soft and from the Hezb to the Jamiat because one finds the Hezb too hard. Each shift is made from a precise network.

In the west and the northwest, the Sufi orders ensured a horizontal transfer between the Harakat and the Jamiat. The Naqshbandi have always had their murid in both parties and at the time of the Harakat crisis, it was often the influence of the pir or their representatives that brought about the transfer en masse (like the Ghaffur mawlawi, the Harakat Naqshbandi and amir in Faryab, becoming amir in the Jamiat in the same province before being killed by the Hezb). Inversely, in the passage from the Hezb to the Jamiat, it is the membership of the cadres in both parties in the network of Islamist intellectuals that permits the transfer. It is therefore in the northeast, where the members of both parties mainly come from the nonreligious government schools, that defections to the Jamiat would be the most frequent (but this common origin can sometimes determine even more violent hatreds). In the west, in contrast, the Jamiat Islamists mainly come from the government madrasa, while those of the Hezb have a secular training; there is consequently no transfer. However, in the rare cases where members of the Hezb are also



Naq'hbandi, the solidarity of the brotherhood prevails over the ideological opposition, as in the case of Almar and Hashtomin in Faryab. A special case, as always, is found among the Aymaqs. Here, it is the network of the qawm and the feeling of Aymaq identity that favors the shift from the Hezb to the Jamiat.

And yet, the underlying reason for the changes is to be sought in the dynamic of the resistance and that dynamic is a result of the expansion of the more effective political and military systems in the north. The Jamiat supplies a political framework more favorable to a modern guerrilla war than does the Harakat, without breaking with tradition like the Hezb.

Three commanding officers share the influence of the Jamiat in the north: Ismael Khan, from Herat to Maymana; Zabiullah, based in Mazar-i Sharif, from Maymana to Kunduz; and Massoud throughout the northeast. The first two benefited from homogeneity of the regions they control, linked to urban centers. The people of the plains rubbed elbows with the great empires and are more open to a central government, provided it be legitimate. Massoud, on the contrary, had to build his space outside of Panjshir by winning out over all the local commanders, one by one. These areas have no intermediate segmentation between the state and the local qawm give rise to intermediate units such as the tribe, capable of autonomy, and therefore forming obstacles to expansion of a hegemonic party. Under such conditions, commanding officers can set up military models that presume action throughout the entire regional space, without being content to attack the post situated in the space of the qawm. Such a strategy presumes a political homogenization of the region, coordination of the commanding officers and centralization of decision-making. Here, expansion of the party does not come about in view of a power takeover within the resistance, but rather, an improved war tool. It therefore finds a favorable response among the people and rank-and-file soldiers, on the condition, naturally, that the commanding officer demonstrate his competence. It is useless to dwell on the fact that the failure of the seven offensives against Panjshir from 1980 to 1984 struck the people's imagination and made Massoud a legendary leader. His personal prestige, linked to the effectiveness of his military organization, convinced many local commanders to seek real training with him. Expansion of the Jamiat in the northeast meant first of all the expansion of a model of military organization deemed more effective by experienced local commanders, especially since nothing in the sociological and cultural structure of the north opposes transfer to the Jamiat.

For Zabiullah, it would appear that it was mainly his political qualities that permitted expansion of the Jamiat based on his authority, especially since he increasingly adopted the "Massoud model." Zabiullah, a former teacher trained at Ibn Sina Lycee, is the most "ideological" of the three. As for Ismael Khan, it would appear that here, expansion of the Jamiat came about more out of inertia, with the party controlling from the very beginning most Islamist networks, both Sufi and mawlawi.

In all three cases, it can be noted that the Jamiat started from the peripheral urban areas or had a large number of families with one foot in the cities (as in the case of Panjshir), while the Harakat was more rooted in the peasantry strictly speaking.

There remains the problem of the establishment of the Jamiat in tribal areas, very weak initially. Well before the Taraki coup, Rabbani understood the vital need not to be cut off from the tribes. The entire history of Afghanistan is linked to the tribes and even if the war brought about a rebalancing benefiting other ethnic groups, one cannot forget about the Pashto. After 1982, the north was stabilized to the good of the Jamiat and Rabbani directed his entire effort to the south. This presumed two things: an evolution of the tribal structures that did not make them incompatible with a party such as the Jamiat, and an adaptation of that same party to tribal realities. The first condition was accomplished for, as we have seen, the great families deserted the internal resistance for the mawlawi, who tended to join the Harakat, or the military commanders. It was mainly among them that there shaped up a movement of defection to Khales or the Jamiat, which had nothing ideological about it. Let us point out as new Jamiat fronts that of Mollah Naqib in Kandahar (Alikozay tribe and Naqshbandi), Jallil in Shahjuy (Zabul, Tukhi tribe) and Abdurrahman Akhundzade in Paktika (Kharruti and Naqshbandi). However, the abandonment of the Harakat mainly helped Khales. It was therefore a Rabbani-Khales alliance that could hope to gather the fruits of the sociological and political mutations affecting the tribal areas.

It remains to be seen why the Hezb-i islami was not able to capitalize upon its organization and effectiveness in order to expand.

#### 4. Question of the Hezb-i Islami

The establishment of the Hezb-i islami is based on a single network: that of the Islamists. But its connection with the political is worthy of a party in the modern sense of the term: the establishment of an apparatus and overall strategy aimed at a power takeover within the resistance. It gives priority to the Islamic revolution over war and believes that the fight against the Soviets will be possible only when the party has first of all imposed its hegemony on the resistance. It would come up against a phenomenon of rejection and an overestimation of its capacity for expansion.

Clashes between the Hezb and the other parties therefore date from the first year of the war. It is not a matter of a fight between Islamists and moderates, but between the Hezb and other parties. The Hezb from the beginning had a very activist policy. Its commandos were the first to leave their solidarity space and impose the party's authority on other spaces. The Hezb proceeded to disarm other parties and would not authorize their political presence within its territory. It wanted first of all to control the civilian population. Well organized, it set up a solid, diversified administration. Traditional officials were cast out and even the qazi could work only within the framework of the party. The party is very centralized and homogeneous. Ideologists, dogmatic, driven by party spirit, the leaders are devoted to Hekmatyar and more detached from qawm solidarities than in other groups.

The Hezb structure is immediately opposed to that of traditional society. Party organization must replace the traditional framework for the exercise of power. There would consequently be a phenomenon of rejection by the population, except in precise cases: identification between the Hezb and an ethnic group

(Pashto in the northeast), sponsorship of the party by a respected mawlawi (Halim in Istalif, Kashmiri among the Kunar Shinwari) or strong popularity of local militants due to their action at the beginning of the uprising (Sattar and Qader in Ghor). Finally, more sociologically speaking, the Hezb frequently has the support of the poorest peasants. Its opposition to traditional structures then takes on an effectively "revolutionary" aspect. And yet, there are also officials who rallied to the Hezb, as in the case of Joma Khan in Andarab.

The Hezb strategy consists of preventing direct confrontation with the Soviets and establishing solid bases, such as the famous Allah Jirga camp, practically isolated in Pakistani territory, a showcase for the Hezb aimed at hurried journalists and a formidable arsenal in view of a possible postwar period, since its current military interest is nil. Hezb pockets are generally situated on communication ways of the resistance and not of the Soviets (Laghman, Ghorband, Koh-i Safi). At regular intervals, the Hezb organized a veritable blockade of Panjshir in which Major Niazi of Kohestan (former Istalif Lycee teacher) stood out.

Local behavior of the cadres would vary, especially when it became clear that the Hezb failed in its attempt to control the resistance (beginning of 1982). An internal crisis broke out and the split became more pronounced between sectarians and moderates. Fighting between the Hezb-i islami and other parties took place mainly in the provinces north and east of Kabul and in Ghazni. The hot points were Kohistan and Koh-i Safi, where convoys moving north had to pass through. The Hezb's favorite target was the Jamiat in the north and the Harakat in the south. In Ghazni and Uruzgan, it also fought against the Hazara of Sayyed Jaglan and even set up little Hazara fronts around Ghazni. In the west, the Hezb was much less sectarian, either out of realism regarding its definitely minority status, or because its leaders were more ecumenical. In Faryab and Jozjan, in contrast, relations were tense and the crisis came to a head in the summer of 1983 with the Hezb's assassination of Mawlawi Ghaffur, successive amir of the Harakat and the Jamiat for Faryab. The battle for control of the Gorziwan bazaar would last months.

The aggressive policy of the Hezb had a double effect: It brought the other groups together and real, solid regional unions were thus created. Furthermore, part of the Hezb commanding officers refused to follow the policy of internal confrontation and concluded local agreements, as in the case of Sayyed Mansur in Baghlan, who rallied to Massoud. Committees following the strategy of confrontation were practically shut up in their redoubts, after watching their mobile groups be driven from other territories. However, in some places (Shibergan in the north, Ghazni and Moqor in the south), the Hezb, helped by its discipline and great firepower, could launch local offensives and take a number of bazaars (such as Maydan in September 1983).

In the long run, the rejection of the Hezb by the people and the other parties, combined with a double internal crisis (in Peshawar, the split of Qazi Amin, Hekmatyar's deputy, and at home, the rallying of local commanders to the Jamiat), gradually rendered the Hezb marginal, even if it must still be reckoned with.

Internationally speaking, the Hezb-i islami has lost the considerable prestige it enjoyed in 1980. At that time, most foreign observers admitted, willingly or not, that the Hezb was the spearhead of the resistance. There were several reasons: The Hezb was the only party that had always understood the interest of the mass media. It knew how to handle newsmen and supply them with the incomplete reports that the latter would then take over as their own.<sup>3</sup> The English and Chinese embassies gave the Hezb much credit in the beginning, and it was also well supported by the Pakistani Jama'at and Arab fundamentalist circles (in contrast, Iran's support has always been very limited, thanks to Shiism). However, as early as 1981, the Hezb's policy of sabotage began to awaken distrust and it lost much of its Western support. Finally, the crisis between Sayyaf and Hekmatyar (fall of 1983) ceased making the latter the privileged interlocutor of the Arab fundamentalists.

##### 5. Parties of Gaylani and Mojaddidi

It is difficult to deal with these parties in the chapter "Evolution of the Parties" because their position in the field is stable and corresponds to the networks we have defined. Gaylani essentially controls clans through allegiance to the khan. These allegiances either date from before the war (among non-Durrani Pashto, the murid) or after it (with the aristocratic royalist Durrani making Gaylani his political instrument). There is no party structure and the local khans remain in control of their decisions, with the people following, not the party, but the official. Gaylani's front is simply the political expression of a tribal coalition achieved through great families. There is no political bureau, but a small court. Arms are distributed on the sole basis of personal relations with Ahmad Gaylani. Stability comes from the fact that the establishment has no other form of representation at home and has an interest in maintaining the party, which has reached its potential limits, however.

The Mojaddidi network is even more scattered (it is the smallest of the six Peshawar parties), but more diversified. One finds, on the one hand, a network identical to that of Gaylani (Popolzay with the Karzay family), but recruiting from among tribal groups that are less noble and less directly linked to the Durrani aristocracy (Nuristani clans as in Waygal; great Kunar families such as the Majruh). One also finds the murid in their two forms: marabout with the Ahmedzay nomads (and their bandit leader Saddo Khan) and spiritualist with the Koh-i Safi groups. Finally, one finds secular-tending elements, particularly minor officials and merchants. Stability stems from the fact that these segments have no chance of finding arms elsewhere, whence their loyalty.

Mojaddidi's party has no prospect of expansion. Gaylani's party relies on the dynamic of the jirga, but the jirga by definition is opposed to the party structure. Furthermore, if it functioned, it would be for the good of the kind or an unquestioned official. But the current leadership, as we have seen, is not moving in the direction of the jirga. It is not enough to dream about a possible but illusory consensus around the king. There has to be a political form to that consensus which neither of the two parties can supply: A guerrilla band is not an electoral cartel.



The evolution of tribalism is the key, not only to the two parties in question, but to the entire resistance. But as we have seen, that evolution goes rather in the direction of the disappearance of the khan and the emergence of the mawlawi (whence the vital importance for Gaylani and Mojaddidi of maintaining the alliance with the Harakat, with them supplying the heads and he the troops).

#### 6. Opportunistic Affiliations and the Rise of Sayyaf

Our analysis tends to show that there is a logic of party affiliations and changes that do not stem from mere opportunism. This is always the case when membership in a party implies a consistent population group. But one sometimes finds isolated armed groups, without any demographic base, generally evolving in the environment of a hegemonic party and becoming affiliated with a different party for more opportunistic reasons. These are often local commanding officers in conflict with their "hierarchical superiors" and seeking, through a change in affiliation, a promotion denied them elsewhere. They may also be former officials pushed out by the new leaders of the dominant party or very minority ethnic groups seeking a means of preserving their identity in a different affiliation. Finally, one also finds much more dubious groups, bordering on petty crime, whose essential purpose is to have weapons in order to protect themselves from any control by the dominant party. Whatever the case, the support of the local population is limited to the relationship of members of the group. The problem is that these groups generally have a fire power out of all proportion to their base and may be an element of confusion, even armed friction.

It is only in Kandahar that the phenomenon is universal. Commanding officers join the group that gives out weapons, but there are no political structures in the province and the horizontal liaison stems from the ulema and tribal connections. From 1980 to 1982, it was mainly Kholes who armed these groups (for example, in Takhar). After 1982, it was mainly Sayyaf who did so, his policy consisting precisely of expanding through armed groups without any base in the population (except in Paghman, his native place). In Nangrahar, south of Kabul and in the north around Shibergan, one sees Sayyaf's groups expanding, very heavily armed, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Their fighting spirit is very uneven, in keeping with their motivations. But the phenomenon is negative insofar as it separates strictly military activity from any political control, which is a flaw in a guerrilla army. Based solely on personal ties, the juxtaposition of Sayyaf groups, even if it expands, will never form a party. Furthermore, its expansion is limited by Sayyaf's hostility to the Sufis and in Afghanistan, no resistance party can expand without the Sufis.

Let us mention that the Iranians also practice this game on their borders (without mentioning the Hazarajat), where one sees the appearance of the so-called *hezbollah* groups, even among the Sunnites (as in Do Qala in southern Farah).

What is surprising is that this process of allegiance in exchange for weapons is not more widespread, given the segmentation of Afghan society and the importance of gifts in the allegiance process (a "great person" owes it to himself to provide for the needs of his supporters), but even if many in the

resistance say they joined in order to have weapons (the paradox is that the very same persons complain of not receiving weapons from parties they reportedly joined for that very reason, which takes a great deal of pertinence away from their remarks, especially since anyone may be subsidized with Sayyaf, which is precisely what does not happen). In particular, tribal areas have generally resisted the process of segmentation by the offer of arms except in Kandahar. The operation succeeded only where there is no more reference to a tribe conceived as an assembly of *khey*l (clans) retaining their consistency, but where, however, one is very devoted to one *qawm*, here merely an expanded relationship. Such is the case of the detribalized Pashto areas such as the southern region of Kabul and more particularly, Logar, which has the biggest mosaic of parties of all Afghanistan. Likewise, one finds this phenomenon in pluriethnic areas, where, as ethnologists have noted, segmentation even strikes the villages themselves. Between the *qawm* reduced to a family relationship and the ethnic group in the broad sense, there is no intermediate unit such as the tribe.<sup>4</sup> This is the case in the foothills of north-central Afghanistan: Saripul, Shibergan and Sangcharak. The existence of isolated armed groups is not a result of tribalism, but of an infratribal segmentation whatever the cause (detribalization or ethnic breakup for historic reasons).

The main tribes in general belong to two parties at the same time and in an uneven way. In one, one mainly finds the *khan* (Mojaddidi and Gaylani), while in the other, the *mawlawi* (Harakat, even Jamiat). One seems scarcely any isolated armed groups. This is a sign that the tribes have generally emerged from their traditional tribal behavior (or what has been frozen under the term) and that they now have a political dimension through reference to a party. We shall leave out the border tribes (Mohmand, Tani), which can scarcely be called part of the resistance.

## 7. Myth and Reality of Free Fronts

In the first 2 years of the war, a curious episode, more European than Afghan, took place. The press and many pseudo specialists on Afghanistan (but also a few authentic ones such as Tapper, unfortunately)<sup>5</sup> systematically pitted the Peshawar parties, deemed "fanatical" for the Islamists, "corrupt" for the moderates, against an internal resistance made up of "independent fronts" led by democratic, even frankly "progressive," intellectuals. The most highly praised fronts included those of Nuristan, Nimruz, Farah and Hazarajat, to which one must add dozens of names mentioned one minute and gone the next (Behsud, Baghlan, "Union of the North").

These analyses pose two different problems: the place of the Maoist left in the resistance and the sociological reality of the "free" fronts. The list of the both consistent and independent fronts of Peshawar parties is very short. One has the Nimruz, the Nuristan and the village of Kalakan. The rest correspond either to the ephemeral presence of an armed group generally led by a Maoist student without any influence over the population or to the "diversion" of a committee nominally under a Peshawar party (generally the Harakat), but reputed to be autonomous abroad (Takht-e Rustam front, Farah front, and so on). This diversion is generally the work of a few Maoist cadres who clandestinely infiltrated the committee and who are connected with SAMA or the Mojahidin Soldiers Front. Generally, the Maoist intellectual is the member of the family of the *khan* (Nuristan, Behsud) and plays on the opposition between the *khan*, who is generally a layman, and the clergy, in order to bring along the former.

Generally speaking, the Maoist infiltrators were driven out when they tried to solidify the tie between the local committee and the underground Maoist organization (as in Anardarrah and Farah), not without causing an internal crisis in the Harakat (Herat, 1981). They sometimes even killed one another, as in March 1984,<sup>6</sup> because of rivalries between factions emerging from Sho'le-ye jawid, some of which were infiltrated by the Khad. In 1984, Maoists no longer represented any importance in Afghanistan.<sup>7</sup>

The reasons for the failure of the free fronts are many. First of all, the intellectuals leading them had to be masked in their movements. There was consequently a gap between the reality of the front and the rhetoric heard abroad. When members of the front or other nonleftist leaders noticed this "diversion," the crisis opened up, especially since the intellectuals are generally much more frequently manipulated by local officials than the opposite. Furthermore, the semi-clandestine organizations that tried to coordinate these fronts did not have the scope of their ambitions and tore each other apart, referring to political ideologies or problems without any connection with reality. Third, tribalism and personal conflicts often remain the underlying motive of political quarrels. Finally, many splinter groups were penetrated by the Khad (the brother of Gol Mahmud Rahimi, Hajji Abderrahman Khan, is the president of the Fatherland Front for Nimruz Province).

In conclusion, one can differentiate between the processes of evolution of the parties during the first 5 years of the war. Between the model that best reflects the segmented nature of Afghan society (juxtaposition of local fronts) and the one that denies it (modern political parties), one watches a middle line emerge: expansion of the Jamiat in the north and of Khales in the south. Both proposed a formula for going beyond the segmentation thanks to reference to Islam, while adapting to traditional society. However, the evolution has meaning only in terms of the in-depth changes experienced by Afghan society at war and the concrete way in which the parties are articulated against the background of civil society. These are the two aspects we shall now examine.

#### NOTES

1. The best analysis is the unpublished report of Jean-Jose Puig (1981), Center of Analysis and Prediction, Ministry of Foreign Relations.
2. On this *jamiat-e ulema*, see P. Metge, "Resistance in Nimruz," AFGHANISTAN EN LUTTE, No 6 (organ of the MSRA), p 12.
3. W. F. Wiegandt, "Nicht aus Heiterem Himmel," 1980.
4. P. Centlivres, "Problems of Ethnic Identity in Northern Afghanistan," in "Iran Moderne," 1976.
5. All the literature of the support movements from 1980 to 1981 grows in the reality of the free fronts, supposed to be federated by "progressive organizations" emerging from the Maoist movement, this out of ideological conviction (like P. Metge) or in order to retain one's illusions (R. Tapper). In the first category, let us mention the periodical AFGHANISTAN EN LUTTE, organ of the MSRA (especially the early issues), D. Khalid

("Afghanistan's Struggle for National Liberation," 1980), P. Metge ("Knowing How to Express Social and Cultural Realite," LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE, March 1982), P. Flandrin (LA CROIX, articles in the 27-28 November and 1-2 December 1981 issues). Among the others, R. Tapper ("The Conflict of Tribe and State," 1983, p 41) and F. Clerc, in AFGHANISTAN EN LUTTE, No 9, p 29.

6. See No 11 of April 1984 of SEDA-YE AFGHANISTAN (in Persian), published in Karlsruhe by the FASA (Federation of Afghan Students Abroad), a leftist organization, in which the members of the Reha'y organization, also leftists, are accused of having assassinated the main leaders of the Takht-e Rustam Front. Among the accused is Mrs Keshwar Kamal, who represented the anti-Soviet Afghan left (actually, the old Maoists) at the PS congress in Valence.
7. We present here a succinct analysis of these three fronts:

In Nuristan, each of the two tribal groups in Bashgal Valley constituted an autonomous front. The Kati, led by Mollah Afzal, in 1981 created the "Free Revolutionary State of Afghanistan," fundamentalist in nature (sole case for a free front) in the northern valley. The Kam, led by Amin Anwaar Khan, set up the Nuristan Front in the lower valley. Nationalist in nature, it would be constantly disputed by a strong Hezb-i islami group led by Mollah Rustam. Prompted by one of his relatives (Jallal), a member of the Mojahed Soldiers Front, Amin undertook propaganda aimed at Westerners, relayed, without his knowledge, by European Marxist-Leninist networks. Pamphlets in his favor credited him with 75,000 soldiers (the real number is under 750) (BULLETIN DU MSRA, June 1980, p 14). Following the break between Amin and Jallal, the Front began to dwindle to the advantage of the Hezb-i islami. Neither of the two fronts is active against the Soviets, lacking any objective in their territory. Whatever the case, these are tribal rivalries, with an opposition between fundamentalist mullahs and secular khan manipulated by a handful of Maoist intellectuals.

The Nimruz Front, in contrast, has a much more tangible reality. In this province, the sedentary people are of different ethnic groups. One also finds many Shiite Persian speakers, called Farsi, along with Baluchis and Ghilzay Pashto. It is a region of large landholdings owned by Pashto and Baluchis. Social oppositions are acute and it is the only province of Afghanistan where one can perceive strong secular tendencies among the peasantry, which accepts the agrarian reform of Taraki. In 1979, the Baluchi tribal landowners emigrated to Pakistan. It is rare for a landowners to use people of his tribe as sharecroppers. For example, the chief of the Brahui tribe (therefore Baluchi), Mamassani Mohammed Hassan, owns large holdings in Lokhi with Farsi sharecroppers, while his tribal group continues to be nomadic under the leadership of his son Khoda Nazar. This explains the continuation of tribal solidarities, particularly among the nomads, which remain very religious and naturally belong to the Gaylani party.

The influence of pro-Soviet communists has been very weak in Nimruz, in contrast to that of the Maoists. One of the current leaders, Parwiz, a Shiite and former student of the military lycee under the king, spent



time in prison for having organized a strike, then returned to engage in agitation in Band-i Kamalkhan, site of a big irrigation project in northern Chaharburjak. The other Maoist leader in the region was Gol Mahmud Rahimi, a Ghilzay Pashto and the son of big landowners. The two founded the Nimruz Front under Taraki. The front was popular among the sedentary people of Nimruz, but dissension soon broke out. Parwiz opposed annexation of the front by the SAMA, desired by Gol Mahmud. Director of foreign relations of the front, Gol Mahmud outwitted the few newsmen who visited the front and echoed his positions (P. Fländrin, LA CROIX, 27-28 November and 2-3 1-2 December 1981). At the beginning of February 1982, the members of the SAMA seized the heavy weapons of the front. Khadir, the military commander supporting Parwiz, was killed. Gol Mahmud received the support of the Farah Maoist fronts, while Parwiz had the support of the local Harakat and especially the Iranians, who considered Gol Mahmud a communist. The government troops took advantage of the dissension to attack. Gol Mahmud, unable to flee to Iran, sought to get to Pakistan, but was captured and killed on the border by his hereditary enemies, the Sanjarani Baluchis. His group retreated to Chaharburjak. During this period, Parwiz withdrew to the Khashrud River and the Kang marshes, where he reestablished a solid, well-organized front. The ethnic element played a role for rank-and-file soldiers (the Pashto joined Gol Mahmud, while the Baluchis and Persian speakers supported Parwiz), but not for leaders, who were led by political considerations.

The last example of the free front to have truly existed is that of the village of Kalakan in northern Kabul. The founder of the SAMA, Majid Kalakani, is from there and it is normal for the qawm of a leader to follow him politically. Like Parwiz, Majid Kalakani is rather a kind of Robin Hood, an ayyar [honorable bandit of Persian tradition] of the Khorassian tradition so strong in Shamali. It was on this basis rather than because of his political leanings that he had a following. Kalakani was arrested and executed in the spring of 1980, but in 1981, the local SAMA front had several hundred rifles and was tolerated by the other parties of the resistance, except for the Hezb-islami. In 1983, the Kalakan front disappeared, but the circumstances have never been determined. Internal decomposition seems to be the most likely possibility, thus following the general decline of the SAMA in Kabul.

## 11. Shiites in the Resistance

The Hazaras represent the majority of Afghan Shiites. Since they are concentrated in the mountains of central Afghanistan, they play a very important strategic role in the resistance, because the Hazarajat is both a communications central and a refuge zone, protected from major offensives. The Soviets gave up any hope of controlling the region as early as 1981. No longer at war against the Soviets, the Hazarajat embarked upon a rampant civil war, interspersed with sudden outbreaks of fighting. The behavior, political leanings and forms of organization easily distinguish the Shiites from the Sunnite majority. A single Shiite party is truly active against the Soviets: the Harakat-i islami, urban in origin (and therefore Kizilbash), but it is solidly implanted on the fringes of the Hazarajat.

## A. The Hazarajat

### 1. Situation Before the War

The origin of the Hazaras and their social organization up until the 20th century are poorly known.<sup>1</sup> It would appear that the tribal system, dominated by the *mir* [elected official in charge of enforcing water rights], was the rule, while being much more hierarchical and partitioned than Pashto tribalism. Even today, the absence of egalitarianism and the harshness of social relationships are the dominant features among the Hazaras, in contrast with other ethnic groups. At the end of the 19th century, the military occupation of the Hazarajat by Abdurrahman and the invasion of the Pashto tribes, who seized the land and the pasture for the nomads,<sup>2</sup> led to a collapse of the traditional tribal system, because of the exodus, the mixing of groups and the decline in political power of the *mir*. On the eve of the communist coup, the Hazarajat remained a poor and isolated region, in which village life was still dominated by the *mir*, the *arbab* [in central and northern regions, equivalent to the village chief] and the *bay* [in the north, equivalent to the khan]. However, a heavy emigration of workers was mainly aimed at Kabul and Iran and school attendance developed. Four categories would play an important role in the war.

The *mir* retained local economic power and shared political power with the Pashto civil servants. While Daoud was always anti-Hazara, Amanullah, then Zaher, tried to integrate the old Hazara elites into the government apparatus. In the 1965 elections, most of the Hazara deputies were *mir* and natives (Hajji Nader in Bamyan and Haji Sultan in Lal).

The Shiite clergy experienced a renewal under the influence of Iran, one that would only grow stronger in the years from 1950 to 1984. A clear distinction pitted the traditionalist village mullahs against the shaykhs trained in Najaf or Qom. The shaykhs remained very close to their Iranian or Iraqi professors and the political allegiances in the resistance reflect the conflicts besetting the ayatollahs of Iran and Iraq. While many shaykhs are sayyad (these are more traditionalist than the others), few are from families of *mir*.

In Hazarajat, the sayyad constitute a veritable inbred caste. Allegedly descendants of the Prophet, they are particularly revered by the Shiites because the direct line from the Prophet goes through his son-in-law Ali, first imam of the Shiites. The sayyad do not consider themselves as Hazaras, but as Arabs. Legend has them arriving in Hazarajat around the 16th century, at the request of a local population wishing to become more legitimate vis-a-vis their Sunnite neighbors, rich in sayyad. Wearing black turbans and having their hands kissed, the sayyad easily receive gifts but do not constitute a social class. They are in all strata of the population. Because of the strong religious connotation of their caste, they easily become mullahs and shaykhs, but on the other hand, few *mir* are sayyad.

A new category appeared in the mid 1960's: the educated youth. Very political, progressive and Hazara nationalists, they turned to Maoism (Keshtmand, current prime minister, is one of the few to be pro-Soviet) or Khomeynism. The

Maoists, often the sons of mir, are strong in the most developed regions of Hazarajat (Jaghori, Behsud). They have founded both Marxistic and nationalistic organizations such as the Hezb-e moghol (the Hazara nationalists actually claim relationship with the Mongols) and the *tanzim-e nasl-e now-e hazara-ye moghol* (Organization of the New Hazara Mongol Generation), set up in Quetta at the end of the 1960's, in emigre Hazara circles, perhaps at the instigation of Pakistani services in order to destroy Kabul's support for Baluchi and Pathan separatists. As we have seen, the Khomeyniites became politicized in the guise of cultural associations founded in Kabul and Kandahar, around Wa'ez and Mohseni, as in Najaf and among immigrants in Iran. Initially, they recruited more among the Kizilbashes than the Hazaras, for there is no Islamist religious leader of any scope in Hazarajat.

## 2. 1979 Insurrection Against Communists

Local uprisings broke out in the spring of 1979, but very quickly, a desire for coordination of all Hazarajat emerged. In September 1979, several hundred persons, mir, mullahs, sayyad, shaykhs and intellectuals gathered together in Waras. After a poorly known erratic period,<sup>3</sup> Sayyad Beheshti was elected president of the Shura-ye enqelabi-ye ettefaque islami-ye Afghanistan (Revolutionary Council of the Islamic Union of Afghanistan). The military command was given to Sayyad Mohammad "Jaglan" ("major"), the son of a local great from Khawat. He is one of the few Hazaras to have been a career officer. The Beheshti-Jaglan team would henceforth reign over Shura.

The military situation was very quickly stabilized. Government troops held but one post in the entire Hazarajat (at Bamyān) and the Soviets ceased all operations in 1981. Internal quarrels would soon begin.

The Shura is divided into three factions. A secular pole includes the mir and the leftists (the alliance of the Maoists and local officials is a constant in the Afghan resistance, the former often being the sons of the latter). They are to be found in the organization called Tanzim and based in Quetta. A radical Islamist pole groups the shaykhs supporting the Iranian revolution, who oppose both the mir, accused of feudalism, and the caste of sayyad, accused of corruption and nepotism (which is not untrue). A traditionalist and clerical center is dominated by the sayyad. It was this center, a majority in the beginning, that would prevail until 1983, based successively on each of the other two wings.

## 3. Factional Struggles Until 1983

Until the summer of 1982, the center relied on the radicals to break the political power of the mir. The main leaders of the mir were arrested (like Mohammad Amir Beg de Kezel), then exiled in Pakistan. But in the summer of 1982, the Shura radicals, backed by the Nasr pro-Iranian Hazara party, previously remaining outside of Shura, attempted a coup against Beheshti. Half of the wali (local governors) in Shura (such as Akbari in Behsud, Alawi in Lal) and Beheshti's own deputy (Saddiqi de Nili) allied themselves with the Nasr and tried to take Waras. The uprising failed thanks to Jaglan, who mobilized the peasants in Nahur, allied himself with the previous accused mir (such as

Gharidad in Behsud and Hajji Nader in Torkman) and took most of the terrain away from the Nasr, which retreated to its bastions in Daykundi, Turkman and Darrah-ye Suf. The situation remained stable until 1984 and Shura was able to set up its administrative system.

#### 4. Government of Shura

Shura took over the rags of the government apparatus of the old regime: the same buildings, compulsory conscription, duties, taxes and uniforms. It is the only faction of the Afghan resistance which, instead of marking a clear break with statism, willingly assumed the mold of a state more a mimic than it was efficient. One may well wonder about this problematical statism: How can Shiism, traditionally presented as rebellious by definition, achieve such accommodation with the state in Iran and Hazarajat? Which is the part of Shiism or Iranian tradition? And yet, let us recall that Hazara society does not have the fabric of the other Afghan ethnic groups: less solidarity, greater individualism, less family solidity (in Hazarajat, one finds real couples, along with -- the inevitable corollary -- widows raising their children by themselves, unthinkable elsewhere, which shows the lesser prevalence of the extended family; one also finds parias, such as lepers). The government is all the stronger because the notion of *qawm* is weak. Instead, there is a sharp sense of the social, almost caste, hierarchy.

Hazarajat is divided into nine *wilayat* (provinces): Jaghori, Nahur, Behsud, Waras, Lal, Yakaolang, Balkhab, Darrah-ye Suf and Daykundi. Each *wilayat* is headed by a *wali* (governor), aided by a security officer. The small towns are headed by an appointed *shahrwal* (mayor). The villages are organized according to their traditional system. Four military fronts border Hazarajat: Jaghori, Nahur, Behsud and Bamyan, each led by an autonomous military commander. Unlike the rest of the resistance, this administration is very separate from the population and looks like a small bureaucracy that is meek, inefficient and often corrupt: set hours for offices (closed on Friday), stamped paper for requests, tax registry, and so on. All the *wali* are *sayyad* and the educated young are kept out. We shall see in Chapter 13 the military organization. Until 1983, the population accepted the system for two reasons: First of all, the peasants of the Hazarajat interior, where the Shura bastions are found, are conservative and used to living under a strict hierarchy. Second, Shura enjoys double legitimacy: religious by virtue of the influence of the *sayyad* and national because it embodies the Hazara autonomy so long desired. In this sense, the fact that Shura mimics the state is not a fault for the Hazara peasant. On the contrary, it is proof of accession to the political reality of Hazarajat: We Hazaras also have our civil servants and their corruption is but the most tangible proof of their existence, for whatever the case, there is not much to manage.

There is a real transfer of power, political as well as economic, from the *mir* to the *sayyad*. However, Shura was bound to fail in the end, more because of its own faults than the attraction exercised by its adversaries. The main problem is that of the corruption of Shura. The taxes instituted by Shura are heavier than seen anywhere else in Afghanistan. First of all, it seems that the principles of Shiite law are more stringent than those of Hanafite



law. Second, the collectors interpret the law in the broadest sense and do not hesitate to take 20 percent of the total production instead of 20 percent of the net income. Finally, they use coercion (let us not forget that one of the first measures was to disarm the population, an extraordinary act in the resistance) and take bribes. The caste spirit of the sayyad, combined with the sense of hierarchy distinguishing the Shiites from the Afghan Sunnites means that Shura is cut off from the population.

## 5. Khomeyni Opposition

The Nasr is a pro-Khomeyni organization set up in Iran at the time of the communist coup d'etat by the merger of activist groups created in Kabul in the 1970's (such as the Geruh-e mostazafin), with an association of Najaf religious activists who had Khomeyni as their professor (*Ruhanyat-e mobarez*, the fighting clergy). The Nasr recruits from among the Hazaras living in Iran. Nothing permits one to say that the Nasr is linked to the Tudeh or the Mojahidin-e khalq; the latter would have other Afghan emulators (the Sazman-e Mostazafin). Little is known of the future Nasr leaders and it would appear that it is rather a cluster organized in Afghanistan on local bases rather than a real party (which is confirmed by the difference in attitude of the people of the Nasr in the interior: those of Turkmen being sectarian, those of Behsud and Jaghori more open). Let us mention Abdul Halim Mazari in the north. An organization of intellectuals, the Nasr can penetrate only by allying itself with the local clergy. The Nasr received aid from Iran. A few small parties claiming to follow Iran (*niru, nehzat* [Islam renaissance movement] survived, generally in the areas disputed by the Nasr and Shura, but scarcely played any role, except culturally speaking (the opening of schools in Jaghori).

Around 1983, a new name appeared: the Pasdarans (guardians of the revolution). It would seem that the creation of that organization was directly encouraged by the Iranian Pasdarans who thought they were invested with a right of control over the Afghan Shiites. The Afghan Pasdarans were led by the Shura dissenters (Saddiqi in Nili and Akbari in Behsud). In the beginning, they were closely linked with the Nasr, but tensions arose because of Nasr's determination to remain autonomous vis-a-vis Iran and therefore, not to join the Pasdarans. The latter received arms from Iran (in very limited quantities) and were joined by young Hazaras living in Iran. At their head were young shaykhs trained in Iran, but very opposed to the sayyad. Until 1983, despite an annual summer offensive, the Nasr and Pasdarans could not penetrate the near monopoly of Shura. In the spring of 1984, however, they drove Beheshti out of his capital, Waras, and took two-thirds of Hazarajat. Shura withdrew to Nahur, the stronghold of Jaglan. Behsud was disputed by the two camps. How is one to explain this rise of the pro-Khomeyniites? First of all, the population was often sick of the Shura abuses. The only other alternative was the Khomeyniites or the mir who had begun to organize politically within a Shura-ye arbabha, doomed to remain fragile because of traditional rivalries. The mir in the regions close to Kabul (Hajji Nader, Gharibdad), more linked to Shura, were politically eliminated in the two successive offensives of the Nasr (in 1983 for the former; 1984 for the latter). The others could not come to an agreement, which left the field free to the Khomeyniites. And yet, the people were far from adhering ideologically to Khomeyni's positions and the peasants

scarcely joined the new troops, mainly made up of young people back from Iran. The situation could therefore always change because what is striking in Hazarajat is the frequency of sudden reversals in alliances and changes in situation, in contrast with the stability or slowness of the evolution in the establishment of resistance parties in Sunnite areas.

One can see that the Khomeyni trend is far from homogeneous. Likewise, parties such as the Harakat-i islami, who claimed to follow the Khomeyni ideology in 1980, are now opposed to it. The disillusionment concerning Iran has spread to Afghanistan. And yet, one phenomenon is striking: the return to Hazarajat of young mullahs who experienced the Islamist revolution in Iran and who studied in Qom (the Afghan Shiites have no longer gone to Najaf since the Iranian-Iraqi conflict). Young, educated, dynamic and with a sense of organization, they leave their stamp on traditional society, no matter what their political affiliation. One sees schools and libraries open up in villages they control, while Shura did nothing: Nehzat schools in Anguri (some 100 pupils), the Nasr library in Khujur (with a shelf for children and...women), madrasa nearly everywhere, and so on. It is a veritable mini cultural revolution that is taking place in Hazarajat.

## 6. Soviet Ploy

It is certain that the Soviets have more interest in allowing the situation to deteriorate in Hazarajat than to intervene militarily. And yet, two facts must be noted. First of all, conflicts in Hazarajat can be explained without undercover manipulation by the Khad or the KGB. There is in Hazarajat a social question that is absent from or resolved in the other regions: Hazarajat presents a blocked society and the Shiite factor (clericalism, hierarchization, respect for authority) accentuates cleavages. There can be no doubt that the Soviets exploit these contradictions, but they are not at the root of them.

Furthermore, despite the lassitude over internal conflicts, no tendency to rally to the regime can be discerned. More than ever, the government in Kabul seems foreign to the Hazaras. The communist government seems to them to be a residue of Pashto power. In the resistance, the Hazaras have regained the hegemony over their own land. Pashto nomads have disappeared or must deal with the Hazara administration on an equal footing. In the resistance, the Hazaras achieved their dearest wish for a century: veritable internal autonomy. Even in word, the regime has never promised to uphold this gain. Except for the Maoists, there are very few communist Hazaras (and they come from urban milieus, furthermore). The Hazaras prefer their own dissension to the return of the Pashto hegemony. In case of crisis, emigration to Iran will prevail over defection!

It is possible that the regime may try to play off the tiny groups of former Maoists, such as the Tanzim, which in 1980 published a work entitled "Hazarajat" preaching a "greater Hazarajat." The book is in fact the pure and simple translation of the work "Khazarejtsi" by Soviet author L. Temirkhanov, published in Moscow in 1972 (by Nauka). But the exploitation of such propaganda operations would presume that the Soviets have finally determined their policy of nationalities, which oscillates between creating a multitude of nationalities

(at the expense of the Pashto, who constitute the mass of communists), or favoring a greater Pashtounistan (at the risk of not being able to penetrate the other ethnic groups, now more combative than the Pashto).

The last unknown element is the role of Iran. Logically speaking, if Iranian control over Hazarajat is strengthened, Iran will either have to accept a *modus vivendi* with the Soviets (which would not affect Hazarajat, now a quasi autonomous republic, in exchange for Iranian neutrality vis-a-vis the Sunnite groups) or find itself increasingly involved, through the Shiites, which the USSR manifestly fears.

#### B. Harakat-i Islami

Islamist in inspiration but allied with Shura, small in numbers but militarily effective, the Harakat-e islami (not to be confused with the Harakat-e enqelab) plays a hinge role. Founded by Shaykh Assef Mohseni Kandahari, who is himself Pashto, it is not Hazara in origin and recruits from among the educated, politicized Shiites, whatever their ethnic group, mainly Kizilbashs, but also Hazaras and Pashto. Its main base is on the fringe of Hazarajat because its members are city dwellers who have retreated to the country: southern Mazar-i Sharif, in Charkent (where it was the cause of the 1979 uprising), western Kabul, with Paghman and Dahan-e Syasang, Jaghori and probably the vicinity of Kandahar also. It is the only Shiite party that truly fights the Soviets. Its most solid fronts are in Mazar, the Unai pass (near Behsud, with Rezavi as commanding officer) and in southwestern Ghazni. It also has underground networks in the cities. It possesses courageous leaders and well trained commandos. From the ideological standpoint, it is part of moderate Islamism (Shariat-Madari in Iran, Khuy in Iraq). It has good relations with the hierarchy of Iranian ayatollahs, but its relations with the Pasdarans the Khomeyni's entourage are tense. A former student of Ayatollah Khuy (old Iraqi rival of Khomeyni who refused to go into exile in Iran at the time of the war in the Gulf), Shaykh Mohseni is held in suspicion by the imam's entourage, although he has resided in Qom since 1979. In 1984, the party anticipated retreating to Quetta and allying itself politically with the Jamiat, which is its Sunnite equivalent as far as ideology and recruiting are concerned.

In the field, the Harakat allied itself with Shura after being attacked by the Nasr in the summer of 1983.

Outside of Hazarajat and its confines, the Shiite resistance scarcely counts. And yet, mainly on the Iranian border, small local groups have taken the name of *hezbollah*, mainly to go the Khomeyniites one better. The city of Herat, Sunnite for the most part, has a large Hezbollah group headed by a young layman, Qari Yekdast ("One Arm"). Disciplined and well-armed, they are placed directly under the jurisdiction of the Iranian Pasdarans, for whom they serve as relays in Afghan circles. Their political weight is greater than their military importance, for they serve as intermediaries between the resistance (here Jamiat) and Iranian authorities. The Soviets have waged intense propaganda against this group following the ban on the Iranian Tudeh.<sup>4</sup>

All along the Iranian-Afghan border, one finds other small Shiite groups, generally following a tiny pro-Khomeyni group (Nehzat or Reja, the latter led in Seistan by Shaykh Naghavi). It should be recalled that the mass of Shiites

in Nimruz are secular and following the leader of the Nimruz front, Parwiz, who recently reportedly entered the Iranian fold in order to ensure his supplies!

While relations between Shiites and Sunnites have been clearly improved by the resistance and while the strategic interest of Hazarajat has led the Sunni parties to closely follow what happens there, there is no coordinating structure between the Shiite parties (established in Quetta) and Sunni parties (established in Peshawar). Only the Jamiat has subscribed to the main claim of all Shiites: application of Shiite law (Jaffarite sect) to the Shiites. Kholes, whose supply lines in Pakistan are regularly cut off by the Pashto Shiite tribes of Orakzay and Turi (including one of the Pakistani Shiite spiritual leaders, Hosseyn Hosseyni), remains distrustful of the Shiites. However, the latter, who mainly fought at the beginning of the war, have imposed their political existence. But it is only if a movement toward unity overcomes splits among the Sunnites that it may subsequently be able to extend to the Shiites. Locally speaking, numerous agreements (and conflicts) bring together Shiites and Sunnites (or pit them against one another). The splits are then political and nondenominational. The Hezb of Hekmatyar joins the Nasr against Shura and the latter allies itself with the Harakat-i enqelab against the Hezb and the Nasr. One therefore finds the same polarization between moderates and radicals, but exacerbated among the Shiites lacking a center (the Harakat-i islami is too weak). The violence of internal conflicts in Hazarajat makes the evolution of the Sunni situation a key to the war.

#### NOTES

1. See E. Bacon, "The Inquiry into the History of the Hazaras Mongols," 1951.
2. H. Kakar, "The Pacification of the Hazaras of Afghanistan," "Occasional Paper," 1973.
3. According to local sources, the first president of Shura was reportedly Abdul Wahid Sarabi, former minister from Ghazni, who reportedly defected to the Amin regime a month after his election. We have been unable to verify the source.
4. A. Stepanov, "Springtime in Herat," in TEMPS NOUVEAUX, April 1983.

#### 12. War and Society

The effects of war on society are far-reaching. However, before analyzing economic and demographic problems, one must look at the ideological and sociological mutations. The emergence of young Islamists, renewed control over civil society by the ulema and the decline but persistence of leading local officials are the three important elements corresponding to the distinction we have made between a state vocation (the Islamists), a universalist legitimacy without any state vocation (the ulema) and an elusive civil society (the network of the qawm).



Unlike most Third World countries, the intrusion of modernism is recent in Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup> There has been no uprooting or cultural alienation. The peasant society has lost neither its memory nor its identity. It is the absence of an identity crisis that explains the absence of fanaticism. Islamist intellectuals are part of the first generation to be confronted with cultural alienation. They all have one foot in traditional society: a rural family, traditionalist parents, Koranic instruction as children. Much more socially integrated than the communists, the Islamists have retained their *adab* (manners, but also traditional culture). They have kept the peasant dress and gestures. While they now wear beards, one does not therefore witness that false traditionalization so frequent in Iran, the Maghreb and Egypt (invention of a new so-called "Islamic" dress and a new symbolic behavior). Of course, one does perceive an evolution: fatigue dress is spreading in the underground and Western terminology in speech. But the evolution is taking place *in situ* and is an example of the mutations of traditional society in wartime.

The ulemas' refusal to assume political leadership of the resistance (it goes without saying that they consider themselves to be the soul of the resistance) is completely coherent with their conception of politics. The body of ulemas is content to legitimize political power in exchange for two things: administration of civil society and recognition of the preeminence of the religious aspect, which is completely compatible with the view of the Islamists. The ulemas therefore concede to the Islamists a political space and the latter grant the ulemas a space in civil society, a rightful space. We have seen in Chapter 3 that the theories of the Islamists were more integrative, but the war brought them back to social realities. Law cannot be reduced to politics. One obtains a figure very different from other revolutionary systems, in which law and politics are supposed to coincide against a background of social transparency, with any gap viewed as alienation, which is the best way to introduce totalitarianism in the name of transparency. This continuation or even reinforcement of civil society is the greatest originality of the Afghan resistance.

At the same time, the system remains unfinished. Lacking any institutionalized clergy, the ulema have never tried to assume political leadership of the resistance (they have not even succeeded in imposing an alliance between the parties). The parties often remain plagued by the system of the *qawm*, as the central state has always been, and traditional society remains more elusive than ever.

#### A. Mutations in Traditional Society

##### 1. Decline of the Khan and Emergence of the Ulema

The war has brought about two parallel mutations: weakening of the power of officials and renewed control of civil society by the ulema. These two phenomena affect all Afghanistan to varying degrees, including the tribal areas and Hazarajat. The category of the officials is not truly homogeneous. The power of the *malek* and *arbab* in the villages has resisted the erosion the best, if only because there are generally no *alim* at their level, only *mullahs*. Always chosen by a consensus, they continue to represent their village, but this time with the resistance. When the latter instituted a system of elected

representatives (the *namayande*), they frequently occupy the office. Their power has truly diminished only where the proximity of fighting gives great importance to the local resistance committee, whose leaders then have a tendency to assume part of the functions of the malek. The khan, on the other hand, have nearly disappeared from the political scene in nontribal areas. The decline of the economy, particularly the market economy in which many of them were engaged, has deprived them of a large part of their power. Above all, the traditional bond of the khan with the administration has done them a disservice at a time when the state is massively rejected. Curiously enough, the khan have not immediately perceived the new regime as communist and, at least in the more remote regions, thought they could prolong their complicity with authority (until the arrival, naturally, of the agrarian reform commission). They are rarely at the root of the call for revolt, which comes more from the clergy and the malek. Many khan, especially in the west, have preferred to go into exile. Finally, the khan have been in an uncertain position with respect to ideological references and the organizational forms of the jihad. Under the old regime, political references of the khan were rather secular. Furthermore, their individualism and their tradition of competition for power makes them ill suited to organize in a party structure. One cannot speak of any opposition of the khan to the resistance, but of the political exclusion of the khan in the resistance. In many cases, their only role is to feed the passing groups of soldiers. It is clear that the pacification policy followed by the Khad is essentially aimed at rallying local notables, considered by the regime to be the weak link in the resistance. The presidents of the provincial sections of the Fatherland Front are very often influential khan (particularly former deputies from the time of the king, such as Khodayaran in Uruzgan and Wakil Naqshband in Zabul).

One finds an example of the systematic exclusion of the khan in Nazarajat. The highly structured Shiite clergy proceeded to disarm the khan and deprived them of local political power, while overburdening them with taxes and duties. The khan tried to counterattack by the creation of a *Shura-ye arbabha* (Council of the Arbab), but the main leaders were imprisoned and exiled by the Shura. The khan are "seated in their house" (*dar khana neshaste*).

And yet, in the north it is not rare for family ties to link the local khan with the new resistance leaders (mawlawi or Islamists), thus facilitating personal relations. But the very great families have disappeared, generally going into exile.

In tribal areas, we have seen that the opposition between khan and ulema was much stronger. When a khan has retained a certain political power, he generally reigns over a much less extensive tribal segment (in terms of numbers as well as space) than the mawlawi, who hold the major portion of the main fronts. The Nurzay in Anardarra (Farah) follow a mawlawi, Faqirullah. The Achekzay and the Barakzay of Sharafat Koh are led by a mullah, Hajji Mohammed Shah. The most famous case is that of Jallaluddin Haqani, commander of Paktya for the Khaless party, which in the powerful Jadran tribe supplants the Babrakzay family. Whatever the case, the khan who remain rarely belong to the old regime establishment. Great families such as the Karzay and Babrakzay, after trying to head the resistance in their tribe, have all left. No member

of the Mohammedzay or even Durrani establishment has returned. The khan remaining behind are therefore more squires than they are real aristocrats. Let us name Amin Wardak, in the Jaghatu plain near Ghazni, and "engineer" Ismat Muslim, who until 1984 had an Achekzay tribal front in southeastern Kandahar.

The power of the khan is declining among the Pashto and the Nuristanis. In contrast, it is holding firm among the Brahui and the nomadic Baluchis. The power of the officials remains strong where social differences are not very marked or where there are few ulema and intellectuals, as among the nomads in general and the Aymaqs. There is consequently a phenomenon of homogenization between the north and the south because the disappearance of the aristocracy and the most powerful khan leave the intermediate-level officials in place and permits the emergence of the mawlawi.

As we have seen, despite the gradual exclusion, the network of the ulema was much more alive in Afghan rural areas. The ulema have often led the revolt and it is their ideological references (Sharia, umma) that the rebels have pitted against the reforms of the regime. The ulema have retained political and military power there where there were few Islamist intellectuals. They are found as provincial amir in Kabul (Shafiullah), Faryab (Mawlawi Ghaffur, then Mohammed Amin), Paktya (Jallaluddin), Zabul (Khyaz ul Haqq) and Hazarajat (Beheshti). But more than military and political power, it is civil power that interests them. The resistance has brought about a re-Islamization of society. Everywhere the sharia prevails over common law and sometimes even over legislation set up by the parties, which at any rate avoid touching civil law. Muslim law, complex and deliberately casuistic, demands long studies. Only the ulema have a mastery of that law whose legitimacy is now imposed on the entire resistance. Furthermore, the weakness of the political structures of the parties prevents one from going beyond the fragmentation of traditional society. Both by virtue of the universalistic references and the homogeneity of their training, the corps of the ulema offers a possibility of homogenizing traditional society and going beyond the fragmentation. They create a more favorable terrain for the expansion of political parties or at least the politicization of society, even if they themselves are generally not political. However, all ulema encountered during the survey belonged to a resistance party.

Emergence of the ulema does not mean that it is the entire clergy that plays a key role in the rural areas. Village mullahs have participated in this ascent only to the extent that their competence extended beyond the mere performance of religious rites. The ordinary mullahs have scarcely acquired any additional influence in the war. The rise of the ulema does not correspond to a clericalization of Afghan society.

## 2. Society of Law

With the exception of those tribes in which reference to the pashtunwali has remained dominant (Tani, Mohmand), the sharia has become the legal norm. Justice is handed down by the ulema specializing in law (then called *qazi*), who are usually joined together in *shura* (councils), at least for important

affairs. Affiliation with the parties plays no role, except for the Hezb-i islami, which recognizes only the qazi who are members of the party. In regions where the name of ulema is important (Panjshir, Herat), one finds a jurisdiction of the first instance and a court of appeal. Articles of law, procedure and jurisprudence are of the Hanafite sect. While it is accepted that the military authorities of the resistance can make a certain number of decisions not directly under the sharia (on discipline, control of weapons, the circulation of property and persons), it is clear that the sharia is imposed even on the political parties and military leaders. Naturally, the field of initiative of the ulema and the local political leaders depends on their mutual influence. Wherever a strong political personality reigns, the role of the ulema is reduced to civil law (Panjshir). Inversely, in areas where no leader emerges, the ulema also have political control of the resistance.

Anything concerning personal status (marriage, inheritance, and so on) is the jurisdiction of the qazi, along with common law crimes. The problem is that in a country at war, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish a case of common law from a political case, especially in the Muslim view, which makes no distinction between the temporal and the religious. Let us take an example: Is a communist taken prisoner to be treated as a political enemy or an apostate? The case is not purely rhetorical: Many prisoners declare they have made honorable amends and returned to the practice of religion. The qazi will tend to impose a kind of religious examination on them, while the military commander prefers to ask about the danger of seeing the man return to the enemy camp. Likewise, how is a government informer who has infiltrated the resistance to be treated? The commanders tend to execute them summarily, with the qazi demanding that proof be in keeping with Hanafite law. Decisions will always depend on the mutual weight of the military men and the religious men in the local resistance. I observed a specific case in October 1982 in Herat, in the Diwanche committee. The resistance had arrested an alleged agent of the government. He tried to escape during the night. When caught, he was beaten. His family complained to the resistance qazi, accusing the mojahidin of torture. The very next day, an investigative commission descended on the committee, took testimony, including from the accused, and solemnly reminded the soldiers of the formal ban on any torture. The trial lasted 2 weeks, carried out by a council of four qazi. The family of the accused (residing in the government section of the city) provided the defense. The accused was finally condemned as a traitor and executed.

The local population can always file a complaint with the qazi concerning possible abuses of the resistance (theft, requisitions, brutality). Few resistance leaders can brave the censure of a mawlawi. The resistance parties have no power over the appointment of the qazi, who are coopted from among the ulema having received legal training at a madrasa. The Afghan resistance is probably one of those in which the soldiers take the most precautions vis-a-vis the civilian population, which assures them of considerable support. And if the seasoned militants do not need to have the need to be fair to the population explained to them, the same is not true for those from 15 to 20 years of age, a group growing in number among the soldiers and who tend to believe they can do anything they want as soon as they have a weapon in their hands. For the



latter, control of the qazi is a barrier. Thus, Shaykh Assef Mohseni put out a booklet entitled "The Problems of the War" (*Masa el-e jang*, which is not a guerrilla manual, but a very casuistic presentation of some 100 legal problems with which the soldier may be confronted, with the solution to those problems.

The limitations of the legal space thus created stem from the low number and often advanced age of Afghan ulema. The network of nongovernmental madrasa ceased attracting young people starting in the 1950's. In many regions, the qazi of the resistance is a simple mullah with a few notions of law. In others, the resistance has recruited government qazi who had resigned under the old regime in protest against the secularization of law. The network of madrasa is very unevenly woven and some areas have none. And yet, after the shock of the early years of the war, one is witnessing a revival of the madrasa, in Peshawar, first of all, where hundreds of mullahs are being trained, mainly to go the tribal areas, and in the interior, around the Sufi brotherhoods of the north, for whom the training of preacher-soldiers has always been a historic mission. But in the south, most of the madrasa have been closed.

In a few cases, the legalism and formalism of the qazi may hinder the military effort of the resistance. The highly praiseworthy rejection of summary executions leaves the manifest agents of the government free. Ethical reference to religion causes urgent political choices to be eluded. For example, between two rival leaders, either one will choose the one supposed to be the "best Muslim," independently of his military qualities, or one will demand of them an illusory and paralyzing reconciliation in the name of Muslim brotherhood. However, this legalism of the Afghan resistance is a considerable asset in a long war in which the support of the population is vital.

The attitude of the population toward the ulema is very positive. The sharia has at least one advantage: introducing a society of law considered to be legitimate by the population. Furthermore, in a country at war, crimes are much fewer in number, if one excepts, naturally, the violent deaths due to conflicts in the resistance (which murders are resolved by political accords and not by the application of criminal law based on the sharia): Amputation of the hand of thieves or the stoning of adulterous couples is extremely rare. Inversely, the return of the sharia has many advantages for the peasant. The standards are in keeping with his religious view of the world. The resistance qazi is more accessible than was that of the government and is not corrupt (except in Hazarajat, as we have seen). The trial, both civil and criminal, is oral, comprehensible and above all, quick. Finally, Koranic law is well adapted to a rural society. In particular, the ban on usury and the guarantee of acquired property correspond to the major demands of the peasantry. Likewise, the sharia defines a clear and moderate system of taxation (the *ushr*, the 5 to 10 percent tax on what is produced by the land; the *zakat*, a 2.5 percent tax on capital). State monopolies are abolished (like the mines of Badakhshan), collective rights over water, cleared land and pasture, threatened by the institution of the land register, are preserved. The qazi are more independent of de facto power than before (again, except in Hazarajat). Likewise, the shariatic principle of the vivification of fallow land (*ihya*), makes it possible to put back into cultivation, for the good of those working it, land abandoned by refugees or absent landowners. The return of the sharia is therefore generally perceived as the establishment of Islamic justice and the

end of the tyranny of the powerful (zolm). Criticism of the peasant would be aimed rather at the continuation of certain injustices and the authoritarianism of some officials, but not at the need to expand the sharia, except in the more tribalized areas.

Another limit on the action of the ulema is that they operate only within civil society and are ineffective in settling conflicts between groups of mujahidin belonging to different qawm.

### 3. Tradition and Modernization

Systematic return to the sharia has the effect of creating the conditions for the advent of a certain form of modernity, at least political, allowing society to go beyond the traditional segmentation into qawm, even if this passage to the political is never ensured by the ulema themselves. This is why the Islamist parties favor the movement, while attempting to control it politically. Reference to tradition is ambiguous. For the ulema, it is a matter of the *sunnat* [tradition of the Prophet] and therefore, of an ethical model, but for many old people, tradition is identified with what has always been done as long as anyone can remember. The modernist leaders of the resistance will therefore solicit *fatwa* (legal consultations) with ulema in order to introduce forms of modernization that the traditionalists consider as unholy, but which are not in contradiction with the sharia. Modern schools, for example, are often considered as one of the sources of communism and there is great reticence over their reopening. In Panjshir and in Wardak, the young intellectuals who want to reopen them obtained *fatwa* from the ulema favoring the reopening of modern schools. Likewise, in allowing the qazi to settle private conflicts, local resistance leaders avoid being implicated in the settlement of accounts, in which they would always be suspected of reacting, not in terms of political needs, but of their membership in a solidarity group (which is often the case they they intervene in spite of everything).

The main problem of the resistance remains the persistence of affiliations in qawm. Even if explicit references are now the universalist references of the jihad, membership in a qawm is returning in the forms of organization and in affiliations, loyalties and local enmities. If private conflicts are resolved before the qazi, conflicts between solidarity groups easily lead to vendettas and are resolved by overall negotiations between the two groups leading to a peace treaty, without any other legal basis than the agreement of the two parties: The malek and elders then regain their entire weight. It is consequently a political need for the resistance to maintain the balance between the qawm and avoid vendettas at the price of compromises that might hinder the military effectiveness of the resistance. For examples, arms will be distributed in terms of the affiliation in solidarity groups and not the strategic situation. Certain leaders owe their post only to their membership in a qawm that one wishes to integrate. Likewise, a qawm will have difficulty accepting that one of its members, a sympathizer of the regime, may be killed by an element outside the group. Whence the paradox of often murderous conflicts within the resistance as soon as they take on the dimension of a struggle between qawm, contrasting with a certain caution, even tolerance, vis-a-vis elements of the regime, in order to prevent an act of political terrorism

from being interpreted as an act of vendetta. This is why it is always risky to execute an alleged agent of the government without an explicit fatwa from a respected mawlawi. The legality of the Afghan resistance is a political necessity in order to prevent the resistance from imploding as a result of the effect of its sociological unwieldiness. But it is clear that if the ulema have succeeded in expanding the field of application of the sharia and in imposing a society of law wherever they are numerous and organized, they have never succeeded, or even truly tried, to create a national structure over the qawm and over the parties. The Political parties therefore remain the only alternative to segmentation into qawm, but they can be established only with the support of the network of ulema.

The conditions for modernizing traditional society therefore exist in the resistance, but the segmentation into qawm is far from appearing to be a mere survival of the past.

Another element of modernization is quite simply the beginning professionalization of the mojahidin. When young people gain access to posts of responsibility, it is not without effect on traditional society. The arrival of radio and weapons requiring technical competence helps the emergence of technicians in the resistance. Another very symbolic element is clothing, which once constituted a criterion of separation between modernity and tradition and which is now evolving. The most dynamic elements of the military resistance wear fatigues and the *pawkul*, the beret from Chitral that has now become the symbol of Panjshir. The war also increases movement and mingling. There is more interest in what is happening abroad because they know that aid depends on it. Finally, the BBC is the main source of information. Rural areas are becoming less provincial.

## B. Organization of Society

### 1. Spirit of Jihad and the Morale of the People

The resistance war has spiritualized individual behavior. Naturally, there is the rhetoric of the jihad, just as there is a rhetoric of Islamic justice, but the proximity of danger and the need to choose between fleeing and a personal commitment gives a real resonance to the desire for jihad, a desire for jihad because without reaching the thirst for martyrdom that one can observe in Iran, the soldier is motivated by the profound belief that he will go to heaven, either because he has killed an enemy (and becomes a *ghazi* [one victorious in the fight against the infidels]) or because he was killed in combat (and becomes a *shahid*, a martyr). The preaching of the mullahs and the ulema finds a very favorable field. Collective prayers and preaching in the mosques reaches an intensity never observed before the war. Sacrifices due to the war are easily assumed, provided that their purpose is clear. One accepts the Islamic tax, the housing of the mojahidin and even the reprisal bombings if resistance members treat the people properly, fight effectively instead of living off the country and obtain a minimum of success. The government and especially the Soviets are never perceived as the protagonists in a civil war, but as the representatives of a diabolical reality, of a radical other.

The resistance has more volunteers than it has weapons and quite often, the determination to rationalize the military organization, purging the fighting groups and making them more professional, encounters strong opposition: Why make the jihad the monopoly of the young? Throughout the country, one easily finds benevolent guides, people who loan their mounts, who house, provide information and finance the war effort, without any coercion. When one knew Afghanistan before, when outside of individual hospitality, everything had to be paid for, the spiritualization is striking. Of course, the resistance has its collaborators, its shirkers, its swaggarts and profiteers, but in a small proportion, all things considered. As a general rule, the number of the "softees" is proportional to the distance from fighting. The morale of the soldiers themselves is very high everywhere. The situation in the civil population, much more harshly tested, is very heterogeneous and in no way linked to the intensity of the fighting. The people of Panjshir, attacked seven times and finally driven from their valley, firmly remain in the resistance. In contrast, much of the tribal population evacuated the country at the first sign of attack. Morale is very high among the old people, to whom the war offers an opportunity to end in beauty, among the very young, who are fascinated by the exploits, and the women, who are the first to oppose emigration. Morale is lowest among middle aged men and the khan, who has retained their nostalgia for the golden age of the royalist times and who are ready for the first compromise permitting a return to the status quo of before. The religious and Islamic intellectuals are naturally among the hawks. One can observe a loss of morale especially in areas in which the conflicts between resistance members have led to the settlement of accounts and to exactions from the people that lead the latter to doubt the usefulness of supporting soldiers who have now become parasites. This is the case in the region of Shiberghan (Jawzjan) and Maydan, mainly the fault of the Hezb-i islami.

What is striking is the vitality of the ethical discourse. One can obtain much from individuals, even endanger their lives, by referring merely to the jihad without any other pressure. Nor am I speaking of the soldiers, whose choice and trade it is, in the final analysis, but of simple shepherds, nomads met in a time of danger and who agree to take an outsider through enemy patrols or under the helicopters, refusing the slightest compensation.

## 2. Committees and Administration

The further one moves away from the combat zones or the densely populated areas, the more the party structure gives way to the traditional system of the malek and councils of elders. Whatever the case, only the Islamic parties and the Harakat have a real administration. The parties of Gaylani and Mojaddidi are a mere juxtaposition of local fronts.

Whenever a party is well established, even if it is not hegemonic, it is organized on a provincial level. The province is headed by an amir who has civilian and military powers. He is generally elected by the party members and his appointment is confirmed by Peshawar. The amir is aided by a deputy, a military commander, a finance officer and a qazi, joined for the Hezb and the Jamiat by a cultural affairs officials and an organization and propaganda officer (the political commissioner). The amir ratifies the elections of the chairmen of local committees and imposes his decision in the case of a rivalry. By way of example, Massoud, the amir of Parwan and Kapisa provinces, was in



1981 aided by seven committees set up as ministerial departments: war, supplies, finances, investigations, culture, preaching and organization, health, plus a foreign relations department in charge of contacts with underground resistance officials. The authority of the amir extends only to the local committees belonging to his party, but in cases of near hegemony (such as Ismael Khan in Herat, Massoud in the northeast), he is perceived by the civil population as the governor of the entire resistance. The real power of the amir depends on his personality, but also on his behavior with respect to the networks of qawm. He will be uncontested only if he places himself above any qawm affiliation.

The basic unit of the Afghan resistance is the local committee (*komite*), also called *qarargah* (the base in Panjshir), the *markaz* (the center among the Pashto), or the *paygah* (the base) or *hawza* (district for the Hezb-i islami). Whether or not it is under an amir, depending on the importance of the party on the provincial level, the committee is always affiliated with a party. Its space generally extends over a district (*uluswali*), but there can be one per village, even several, if one finds in the village different qawm or several parties. Istalif had six committees (one per party) and the valley of Panjshir had 40 *qarargah*, all Jamiat. Inversely, in the desert areas of Farah or on the Ghor plateaus, one can travel as far as 2 days by horse before finding a committee. Three elements therefore combine to define the committee: a geographic space, a network of qawm and a political affiliation. The committee is located in a precise place: often the *qala'a* (fortified farm) of an official who has rallied to the regime and whose property has been confiscated by the resistance. Contrary to the posts of the old regime, the committees are generally situated right in the villages, despite the risk. Only the Hazaras reuse the administrative buildings of the old regime. In highly exposed areas, the committee is mobile. In 1984, the tendency is to separate the committees from inhabited villages.

At the head of the committee is a director (*ra'is* or *modir*), with his assistant (*mo'aven*), a treasurer (*amir-e mali*) and a military commander. Low-level administration can be stifled if the population administered by the committee is large. The big committees have a qazi. The function of the committee is dual: military and political. One or several armed groups travel in the committee, each headed by a group leader (*sar-e grup*), who has no political power. The Jamiat and Hezb committees generally have a section of cultural affairs, propaganda (*dawat-o tanzim*) and sometimes health. This extension depends on the weight of Islamist intellectuals in the committee. It is to the committee that the peasants pay their taxes, file their complaints and requests. It is with the committee that the *malek* deal on behalf of their fellow citizens. The committee controls movement. It issues passes to deserters, limits the circulation of wheat (to prevent it from being turned over to the government), escorts newsmen, receives groups from other parties that have reason to cross its area of jurisdiction and houses groups belonging to its own party. The committee also serves as a prison for common law and partisans of the regime. It is on the committee that the qazi sit and it is the committee that holds deliberations with local officials. Minor police matters are handled directly by the *ra'is*, who sometimes intervenes to establish price controls and prevent speculation. Generally speaking, this is where military operations are decided upon.

The military activity of the committees varies greatly, as we shall see. Many are mere garrisons and somewhat inactive. The committees are always made up of local militants. They embody a new government, but they remain the emanation of local solidarity groups. It may happen that the committee is the privileged expression of a local qawm, but one can be sure that the other qawm will sooner or later constitute their own committee, affiliated with the same party or another. The village of Esfarz (Herat) has two Jamiat committees, each having 25 soldiers, one for the Qipchak qawm and the other for the Tajik qawm (the two being Persian-speaking). At the same time, through its affiliation with a party, the committee also represents a form of centralized power at the heart of, no longer on the periphery of, the village community.

### 3. A Society and a Liberal Economy

The political organs of the resistance are far from totally occupying the social space of the liberated areas. The ulema maintain legal institutions everywhere, parallel to the local resistance committees. Likewise, if the committee has become the center of political activity in liberated areas, there are other community areas outside its control. For example, the mosques are the place to stay for people who do not belong to the solidarity space and who are going through the village: soldiers from other regions, refugees, deserters. At the mosque, one is sure to find bread and tea without sugar from the people. The mosque belongs to no party and access to it is always free. In Hazarajat and Paktya, the private inns function as they did before. Elsewhere, officials continue to house guests and do not feel obliged to report to the committee of those whom they receive. The private home is inviolable and the resistance never make any searches. Even a group on operations will always ask permission from the master of the house before entering the private space. Terrorist actions are always staged outside of the house of the man sought. The inviolability of the private sphere even applies to the enemy.

The economy of the liberated zones remains a liberal economy. Prices and contracts are negotiated between the two parties. The resistance intervenes only to control the circulation of wheat and certain prices (such as transportation). The Soviets try to buy at full prices the seasonal wheat right after the harvest, at a time when prices are lowest, using nomads for the purpose. For example, in the fall of 1982, Samanzay nomads from Badghis proposed to the Ghor Aymaqs over 100 afghanis per sir (7 kilos) of wheat, when the local price was 35 afghanis. The wheat is then taken to Qala-ye Naw and turned over to the Soviets. The purpose is dual: to supply the USSR and make prices go up in liberated zones. The resistance then imposed wheat quotas on nomads corresponding to their consumption. Armed skirmishes took place. In Herat, one can transport wheat only with written authorization from the resistance. Likewise, the prices of certain services are controlled, like those of transport, which have gone up considerably given the danger and the shortage of gasoline. But corporations of drivers prefer to regulate the market themselves. Very powerful, they negotiate directly with resistance committees. In Jaghori in southern Hazarajat, the point of departure for vehicles going to Pakistan, one finds two corporations (ittihadia), one Sunnite and one Shiite. After months of competition, they decided to divide up the market. Departures are done alternately in each group and the bill is settled at the confederation office.

Certain regions have experienced a considerable economic decline, but others a veritable economic boom, one that is precarious, to be sure. In Hazarajat, bazaars crop up like mushrooms and one can find the essential items. Merchants generally have a shop in Kabul kept by an old man not subject to conscription. The young people keep the shops in free zones. Merchants unite for transport. The resistance is content to open up a post to control the bazaar and, naturally, collect taxes, which are very high in Hazarajat. The resistance has never organized supply networks for the civil population itself. In zones isolated by the fighting and deprived of any bazaar, every family has to manage on its own to schedule a regular expedition to the nearest resistance bazaar. The Aymaqs, for example, may have to travel up to five days on foot to reach either the Del-e Takht in Herat Province or the Garmao bazaar in Hazarajat. A merchant taking the risk of transporting his goods in isolated areas may sell at the price he sets. The resistance, whose logistical system is very weak, knows that it cannot take the place of private enterprise and that excessive control of economic activities would paralyze trade. Finally, the ideology of the resistance is favorable to private property and free enterprise. And yet, it is certain that the resistance underestimates the political importance of economic questions and supplies. Even the transport of weapons is organized in most cases by the private sector. A group of mujahidin rents the services of a camel driver or buys horses. Requisitions are rare, temporary and always viewed askance. The positive side of this logistical failing of the resistance is that it is more difficult for the Soviets to dismantle a piecemeal and lucrative communications system. The merchants, who benefit from transactions with the resistance, are influential in Kabul. As soon as the Soviets cut one communications path, one sees little entrepreneurs drawn by the possible profit trying to open up a new way. Finally, there is no countereconomy. The economy and the merchant networks of the resistance are those of the entire country. Stifling the economic circuits of the resistance would be to stifle the country, which the Soviets cannot afford, since they cannot feed the zones they control. Therefore, outside of local and temporary blockades and massive but highly selective destruction, the economy of the resistance will survive because it is less fragile -- being more primitive and autarchic -- than that of the regime.

With prices governed by the law of supply and demand, the market is very unstable. Wheat may rise in price five times between the time of the harvest and the in-between springtime period. Prices of farm products are clearly lower in free areas than those in the capital. Inversely, pharmaceutical and industrial products are higher in rural areas. And yet, the situation of shortages and an inadequate diet does not fundamentally differ from that existing before the war, even if products such as sugar are often lacking.

Sharecropping and wage contracts are always concluded freely. If these contracts are generally fairer than previously, it is less a consequence of the preaching of the ulema than a lack of labor due to the exodus, particularly of young people who go to Iran or the Gulf to look for work. Seasonal workers who circulate in terms of harvest periods have practically disappeared because of difficulties moving around. Young people leave the approaches of cities because of the fear of sweeps. Finally, the resistance troops immobilize the potential labor. In Hazarajat, one can observe a veritable shortage of

agricultural workers. However, it is certain that the qazi of the resistance have imposed measures against usury, the main scourge of the peasants, at least where the qazi can rely on the support of resistance committees against economic officials, meaning where the network of committees is dense. However, the departure of the great khan and the difficulties of the war have reduced social inequalities, especially since the simple peasants who make up the main resistance battalions now have weapons and political weight. Neither the resistance parties nor the local resistance committees are ruled by the khan, whose political decline we have noted.

One can also see a few cases of corruption. In Hazarajat, it is frequent, as well as in certain isolated committees left to themselves (often Harakat). A certain amount of banditry appears in the border zones (arms convoy racket). However, the resistance leaders are honest for the most part and wherever it can, the resistance, through the qazi, pushes for a moralization of contracts and economic trading. But their weapon is more urging and the challenge to a number of corrupt bosses than the institution of any regulation or economic control reminding everyone of the communist system. For the Afghans, freedom also means economic freedom.

### C. Movement of Population and Ethnic Reclassification

We shall not study the matter of the refugees in Pakistan and Iran.<sup>2</sup> A refugee is no longer a member of the resistance. What interests us is the reasons for the decision to leave and the reclassifications that emigration causes. Rural exoduses are not directly proportional to the intensity of the fighting. The civil population can hang on to devastated land (Panjshir) or, on the contrary, anticipate fighting to come and leave before the engagements, as in Helmand, or flee following a single operation, as in the case of Kunar in 1980. The move may be abroad but also toward the capital. Cultural factors consequently also play a role and must be examined.

#### 1. Exodus of Protest or *Hejrat*

To leave a Muslim land occupied by infidels without fighting is at least licit, if not recommended by the Koran: "Those who have emigrated and waged combat in the path of Allah (...) are truly the believers" (Koran VIII, 75, Blachere translation); "We were humbled on earth." Then the angels will say: "Was the land of Allah not vast enough for you to emigrate?" (Koran IV, 99). Following the example of Muhammad leaving Mecca for Medina, many Muslims believe it to be a religious obligation to leave that which has ceased being a land of Islam for another Muslim country. *Mohajer*, refugee, etymologically means one who has made the *hejrat*, the hegira. These protest exoduses in Afghanistan are always collective, roused and organized by the traditional officials. They imply the passage of a structured group abroad, generally Pakistan, where it retains its cohesion for a certain time. Let us note as an example the Kirghiz of Pamir under the leadership of Rahman Gul, the Baluchis of Helmand under the leadership of the leaders Aanjarani and Gurgich, the Sabari tribe in Paktya, and so on. If the decisive element is not the gravity of the military or economic situation, a sporadic threat may set off the movement. These protest exoduses almost exclusively concern the tribes. An exceptional case of hegira in the interior is supplied by the *Cheshtiyya* brotherhood of Chesht-i Sharif (Herat). Following the preaching of the brotherhood ulema,



who claimed to be explicitly following the Koranic hegira, 300 of the 400 families fled their city in one day (11 April 1981), going to the surrounding mountains, where they continued the war.

## 2. Escape in the Face of Fighting

In some regions, the regular Soviet offensives, with armored vehicles and air support, the intensity of the fighting, the destruction of crops and reprisals against civilians make mere survival difficult. In these cases, the exodus becomes disorderly and individual. The decision is made by each family separately. One first of all flees to the adjacent valleys, then either to Kabul or Pakistan. If the families are found in places of exile, high-level groups are not formed. This type of exodus has a destructive effect. Many families then hesitate to flee and try to remain, even under very difficult conditions, which is frequently the case in nontribal zones. The protest exodus mainly concerned set groups, therefore the tribes, and came about at the prompting of officials, while in nontribal zones, the leaders try instead to check the movement.

Not all the refugees end up in Pakistan and Iran. The war has brought about a new rural exodus. Formerly, the rural exodus mainly consisted in single men working in the city, but leaving their families behind in the country. Now the opposite is true. The families flee to Kabul, while the young people flee the city and forced conscription. The Persian-speaking population (like the Panjshiri) prefer exodus to the city over emigration. The process of urban concentration concerns only Kabul, for in the other cities, the sporadic fighting takes place within the very urban perimeter. Kabul has doubled or tripled in population and the people are piled together in housing. When city dwellers decide to flee, they go to Pakistan and do not return to the country, except those of the young people who join the resistance.

## 3. Modifications of Nomadism

The nomadic way of life persists, but with fewer persons involved and shorter itineraries. Inversely, in some cases, one witnesses a renomadization of the people, especially the herders, in order to protect themselves from the fighting. This phenomenon is in limited areas. The semi-nomadic nature of the Aymaqs persists because the summer camps are safer.

The Pashto Ghilzay and Durrani tribes roamed, before the war, from the periphery of the country where they had their winter quarters to the center of Afghanistan in the summertime. They are confronted with three main problems. First of all, the winter areas, generally made up of desert plains, are easily accessible to Soviet tanks which patrol, control, loot and recruit the young by force. The most threatened tribes are those who winter from Herat to Nimruz (Nurzay, Alizay, Sarzay, Brahui). Only the Taraki and the Samanzay of Badghis and Faryab, paradoxically located on the Soviet border, are tranquil. The second problem stems from the difficulty of crossing the paved roads that separate the winter areas from the summer areas. These routes are constantly patrolled and the nomads are subjected to all kinds of harassment. However, the summer areas in the Hindu-Kush are safe, but the rigors of winter make them impracticable. Finally, the traditional system of trade between nomads and farmers is facing

a crisis. The Soviets push some nomads to systematically buy the wheat and then resell it to them. In medium-range terms, the increase in the price of wheat is detrimental to all nomads because the price of meat remains the same in rural areas and trading in hides has declined. When the Soviets proceed to carry out local blockades, such as the machine gunning of all motor vehicle by helicopters between Herat and Nimruz starting in 1982, trading between the sedentary population and the nomads (wheat for meat, hides and brushwood for fuel) is interrupted, mainly to the detriment of the nomads.

Many nomads then make their last trip. They no longer leave their winter pastures. They often settle in Pakistan. Thus, the Pashto tribes of Baghlan began to modify their route as early as 1980, one day crossing the Hindu-Kush in the south and crossing over into Pakistan. At the time, such modifications are perceived as provisional. In the winter quarters, one waits for the situation to get better, but little by little, the camp becomes an earthen village and the prospect of returning blurs.

When one tries to maintain the traditional movements, one either modifies the route and the purpose or the size or the group or the cycle. Trips are shorter. There are no more nomads between Behsud and Chakcharan or any nomad bazaars such as the one at Gumab.<sup>3</sup> Risking being looted by the Soviets, the nomads have no more interest in transporting goods to an impoverished population. In contrast, the nomadic way of life remains very much alive on the periphery of the central Hindu-Kush central mountain range: Badghis, Safed Koh, Syah Koh, Uruzgan, Ghazni. The Nahur plain remains a great center of nomadic concentration in the summertime.

Finally, one can observe a modification of the cycle. Certain nomads spend one or two years in safe regions, without leaving again in the spring, like the Ghilzay, who spent the summer in the Nahur region. Because of the blockade of Hazarajat ordered by Taraki in 1979, they did not return until 2 years later, finding themselves confronted with a new situation in which the Hazara peasants, traditionally dominated, were armed and organized.

The nomads have generally adapted well to the change in the ratio of forces with the sedentary people, due to the weapons and the organization of the latter and the disappearance of a Pashto administration that systematically favored them. They often join a resistance party (Harakat or Gaylani). Thus, in Nahur and Jaghori, it is the Harakat-i enqelab that represents the nomads with the Hazarajat shura. The nomads in the south and west are very involved in the resistance. Those in the east and the north are clearly more opportunistic.

#### 4. Etnic Reclassification

The movements of the population do not affect the different ethnic groups in a uniform way. The structured groups and consequently the tribes tend to react as a bloc. If the decision to leave is made, it is for Pakistan because the social structures in the Pakistani border zones are close to those of Afghanistan and the people are Pashto. The proportion of Pashtos among the refugees, even including those from Iran, is greater than their proportion in the Afghan

population. The demographic weight of the Pashtos has therefore declined in Afghanistan, which is not without political consequences. Certain small ethnic such as the Khirghiz and the Gawarbatis have nearly totally disappeared from the country. In contrast, the weight of the Tajiks, the Hazaras and the Uzbeks has increased considerably, especially since the new population of Kabul tends to be Persian-speaking.

In numerous regions where a minority ethnic group was surrounded by other population groups, it has left again for its native region if it was of recent vintage or if it had come for professional activities (seasonal workers, merchants, and so on), without mentioning the civil servants who, when they have joined the resistance, have also returned to their native region. Except for the nomads, there are no more Pashto in Hazarajat or on the Nuristan routes. The Hazaras have left Kabul and Ghazni. Only the north still offers a real ethnic mosaic.

In conclusion, the sociopolitical consequences of these population movements are the decline in influence of the Pashto, the tribes and nomads, in the face of the nontribalized sedentary people in general. But one can speak of a new balance, rather than of a new Persian-speaking domination.

#### 5. New Geography of Communications and Economic Axes

The circulation of men has never ceased with war, but takes new routes or uses old ones that the construction of modern roads (such as that in Salang) had caused to be abandoned. Regions recently excluded by the opening of these roads have again become zones of passage, such as Hazarajat, Paktya and the Anjuman and Wulf passes before the reoccupation by the Soviets. Mountain ranges difficult to penetrate play a role in the circulation of men, because they are protected from bombing. Such is the case of Nuristan. In certain places, the new circulation of resistance members, refugees and deserters has brought about an economic prosperity by the opening of inns, bazaars and "road stations" (Paktya, Hazarajat, where Jaghori is the prototype of this economic boom). Contraband is more active than ever among the Mohmand, Jaji, Mangal and Baluchis (there is even a "smugglers' front" in Robat in Baluchistan).

Terminal bazaars have been set up in the valleys in places accessible to vehicles and relatively safe. The mouths of the valleys, once a prime spot, are now unsafe and no longer have any bazaars (Hari-Rud between Cbe and Herat, Andarab, Panjshir). Inversely, certain systems of circulation of goods have totally disappeared and entire regions are cut off from the national market. This is the case of Ghor Province, once supplied by the Chakhcharan bazaar, now turned into a Soviet base and inaccessible to the population.

There is definitely a movement of systems of circulation and of the economic centers of gravity, but this situation is unstable, for at any time, the new bazaars can be destroyed and ways of communication cut off by the Soviets. Moreover, the resistance bazaars are becoming a political (and financial) stake between parties, particularly the Hezb and the Jamiat, for the northern bazaars, as well as the upper Andarab and Gorziwan in Faryab. This dissension, covertly encouraged by the Soviets, can neutralize regions once inaccessible to occupation troops.

## 6. Strategic Consequences of Population Reclassifications

The Soviets can integrate these phenomena in a counter guerrilla strategy. The exodus, in all forms, deprive the resistance of its demographic base. A certain number of contradictions are exacerbated. Nomads and the sedentary people oppose one another on the question of the free circulation of grain. The people of the bazaars held by the resistance oppose the latter's military activities that could endanger the status quo. The smugglers also want a certain modus vivendi with the Soviets in which smuggling is on the scale of the entire tribe. Finally, the refugees are a factor of destabilization for Pakistan.

And yet, the Soviets have difficulty controlling all these phenomena. The sudden influx of refugees into Kabul, the consequence of the rural exodus, leads to inflation and shortages in the capital which the Soviets cannot master. The population remains hostile to them. Goods subsidized by the regime go back to rural areas where, except in special cases, wheat, wood and fruit are less expensive. The Soviets have been unable to build a buffer zone around the capital, for in order to feed the population, they need to let rural areas produce and goods circulate. There is consequently a contradiction between the two aspects of their policy: isolate the rural areas and normalize daily life in the cities.

The influx of refugees into Pakistan has created strong tension with the local population, but international aid has enriched the border areas. To date, the Afghan refugees are well controlled politically by their parties and they easily fit into local life. There is no Palestinization. One even observes partial returns of refugees (Kunar).

Inversely, it would appear that the resistance may continue to have the demographic base necessary for its reproduction.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the current exodus has certain attached advantages: The population pressure that was beginning to be felt on the land is no longer a factor and social tensions are therefore attenuated. The elements that leave the first are the "softer" ones. Relations between nomads and the sedentary population have reached a new balance, with nomads affecting summer pasture less. The new population balance has entailed a political balance between ethnic groups as well, the pledge of greater cohesion of resisting Afghanistan. For example, the Hazaras have obtained from their movement into the resistance a greater autonomy than they could have hoped for from a central Pashto, communist government. They cooperate with and help the other ethnic groups in the resistance all the more willingly because they are now on an equal footing.



The question may be asked whether the disappearance of the central government and the de facto autonomy of the solidarity spaces would not give rise to a breakup of Afghanistan, which the Soviets could digest piece by piece. The parcelling was in fact a characteristic of the first phase of the uprising. But while it is true that the individual characteristics will remain, the unifying elements of the resistance win out over the centrifugal forces. These elements are political (national in the beginning), cultural (same vision of the war as a jihad) and sociological (emergence of the corps of ulema). The observed population modifications would not tend to modify this profound identity of civil society.

#### NOTES

1. For example, there was no tentacular development of an urban metropolis before the war. Preliminary signs appeared in the 1960's, but Afghanistan does not have the features of an underdeveloped country (the birth rate does not exceed the rate of growth, while trade and the monetarization of the economy remain low): Y. Lacoste, "Kabul," BULLETIN DE L'ASSOCIATION DES GEOGRAPHES FRANCAIS, No 355/356, 1967.
2. Specific studies on the problem of the refugees are numerous. Let us mention the report by G. Viguie for the Ministry of Agriculture (1982).
3. K. Ferdinand, "Nomad Expansion and Commerce in Central Afghanistan," FOLK, 1962.
4. See the theoretical but very interesting study by P. Allan and A. Stahel: "Tribal Guerilla Warfare" in JOURNAL OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION, 1983.

### 13. From the Warrior to the Guerrilla Fighter

Who are the *mujahidin* [soldiers in the jihad]? One can distinguish three categories. Armed resistance members, both regulars and recruits (*maslaki*, professionals; *nezami*, soldiers; *motaharek* or *sayyar*, mobiles) number some 150,000 in all Afghanistan, or as many as the Soviets in 1983. Next come the part-time soldiers (*mahali*, locals; and *molki*, civilians), generally affiliated with a party and under a local committee, but who are mobilized only in case of danger and who in the meantime cultivate the land. Finally, any Afghan owning a weapon and living in the free zones is a potential *mujahed*. It is the first category that mainly interests us.

The soldiers are always organized around a local base into committees that resemble one another throughout the country, whether in the tribal areas or not and no matter what the party. However, whenever it is a matter of moving on to a higher stage of war, one sees different ways of thinking, concepts and structures go into action.

#### A. General Features of Military Organization

##### 1. Committees, Networks and Spaces

In order to draft a military strategy, one has to be able to operate on a regional, even national level, no longer local, and therefore, go beyond the segmentation into *qawm*. For example, it is always difficult to operate an armed group in a region that is not one's own (for example, Panjshiris in Andarab). The people may then prefer a communist, but distant, government that will leave them alone to the authority of an armed group perceived as the emanation of the rival *qawm* rather than as a representative of the *umma*. The problem is posed differently in tribal zones and in the north. In tribal areas, there is often a territorialization of the tribes. The tendency will therefore be toward the establishment of relatively homogeneous tribal fronts, but the armed groups will not leave the tribal space except to attack "detribalized" objectives," meaning large bazaars that are neither situated on the precise territory of a tribe nor settled in a homogeneous manner by a particular group. Most of the bazaars in tribal areas have a composite and often Persian-speaking population (Anardarrah in Farah, Khost, Urgun, Gardez, and so on). The neighboring tribes therefore organize somewhat coordinated "descents" on these bazaars. Membership in parties plays no role in the military organization or the strategy of the tribes, even if each tribal front belongs to a party. In the Kandahar region, a front is frequently doubled. The base camp is in the mountains, but the groups operate in the vicinity of the city 2 or 3 days' march from the camp. Here, a front has from 50 to 1,000 soldiers, depending on the prestige of the leader and tribal affiliations. If there is good understanding, there is no coordination and the region experiences a juxtaposition of dozens of fronts affiliated with all parties.

On the other hand, in the north, the *qawm* are clearly less territorialized and the party structure is the only thing that makes it possible to get beyond the segmentation. But at the same time, the rivalry of the parties is stronger than in the south. The north presents the paradoxical case of a more conflict-ridden and fragmentary situation, but one more favorable to the emergence of

a coordinated military structure. In the north, a committee corresponds more to a network than to a space. This lesser territorialization of the qawm and the parties makes the circulation of armed groups or, at least, the establishment of mobile groups bringing together people of different origins, easier. Massoud was able to establish "garrisons" of Panjshiri troops in Ashawa (west of Salang) and in Andarab. Herat's *ghund* [regiment] has soldiers and even officers from Shamali, Badakhshan and Faryab, including Uzbeks. This explains why it is in the north that one will see the emergence of a budding "resistance army," when the south will have but local committees and ephemeral coalitions.

## 2. Groups of Regulars

Regular combat groups are set up in the local "committees." Their composition and daily life are similar throughout the country. A group has from 20 to 50 men. The men live in the committee, but they have permission to go visit their families or, as frequently occurs in tribal zones, they rotate with their brothers. They are generally young and from poor peasant backgrounds. In the committee, they have a standing that is higher than that of their family (for example, one eats meat more often). Discipline is strict although very fair. Each person must be accountable for the condition of his weapons and for the ammunition entrusted to him. In certain committees, individual munitions are counted every evening and the soldier must pay for unjustified gaps. The head of the group (*sar-e grup*) has only military duties. He is a section lieutenant and is generally older than his soldiers, often with some education. However, there is little difference between recruits and soldiers (except among the Shiites, who are always more hierarchical). They eat the same thing and sleep in the same room. Life is collective and intimacy does not exist. The committee usually has a cook. In the buildings, there is a reception room where the chairman of the committee is found. He has political power. The soldiers come and go at will. Everything is public. "Secret" affairs are handled by whispering into each other's ear.

Collective prayer sets the pace for daily life. Many committees have political-religious training courses, which are naturally more developed among Islamists.

Patience and endurance with respect to the routine and inactivity are astonishing. In one sense, the fact that most rank-and-file soldiers live better than in civilian life excludes all apathy. Although one sees the development of a "garrison syndrome" in committees far from combat zones which cannot fight outside of their solidarity space, mobilization remains constant and morale at a high level. There is no recruiting problem. It is the lack of weapons that causes volunteers to be rejected.

## 3. Military Activity of Local Committees

This activity varies in terms of the proximity of the adversary. In nearby areas, especially in the urban peripheries, activity is daily (patrols, routine ambushes), even if skirmishes are rarer. With the intensification of the war, one notes a growing gap between the experienced *mujahidin* of the war zones, who are becoming more and more professional, and those in the more peaceful areas, whose conduct is more amateurish.

However, in most committees, military operations are infrequent and routine plays a major role. The main event is the appointment of night sentries (*peyra*). There is practically never any training. Only a few seasoned army sergeants try to teach soldiers to march, the usefulness of which is not clearly perceived by those involved. Firing practice is done on the occasion of contests. There are no simulated attacks or demonstrations using models or charts.

A committee fights against the government post or on the road in its territory. The operation is decided upon at the last minute and democratically. The group knows the terrain very well, eliminating the need for preliminary instruction. The latest information transmitted by resistance "agents" is communicated to group leaders. Improvisation remains the general rule.

Groups in the outlying urban areas are more active and have more varied targets: police stations, regime officers, administrative buildings, enemy patrols. In contrast, rural groups have often established a *modus vivendi* with the government posts. The latter provide food and ammunition and are very careful not to have sorties. In exchange, resistance members are content with symbolic attacks that enable the post chief to justify the use of munitions which he in fact turns over to the resistance. Everything changes when the Soviets mount an offensive. Generally, resistance members duck the initial clash and mount harassment operations, but sometimes, as in Kandahar, there is a veritable war of positions.

The Soviets scarcely risk waging sporadic helicopter operations aimed at a particular committee, preferring either precise bombing or massive operations. The committees, which are on a strictly military level, scarcely suffer from the Soviet counterattacks. In exposed zones, they are well hidden in the mountains and sometimes enjoy antiaircraft protection that deters pilots from coming down too low. In the case of major offensives, the committees, on alert 24 hours a day, rapidly evacuate the threatened position. It is therefore the civilians who pay the price of the Soviet counterattacks. Military losses of the resistance are low. For example, during the biggest Soviet offensive in Panjshir in May 1982 (Panjshir V), Massoud lost only 10 percent of his troops in 2 months.

The fabric of the local committees is very tightly woven. There is at least one for each of the 325 districts (a district such as Panjway in Kandahar has several dozen). There must be nearly 4,000 committees with an average of from 30 to 50 regular members, with double that number in the reserves, which can be immediately mobilized. However, the disparities are enormous. Several committees belonging to the same party constitute a front (*jabha*). It is the omnipresence of the committees that ensures the real foothold of the resistance in the country. Military effectiveness and political importance are not directly linked. The committees are politically indispensable. They embody the resistance for the population, even when they are insignificant militarily speaking.

If the committees are the backbone of the resistance and the meeting place of the soldiers and the population, as well as of military and civilian structures,



they nevertheless remain very static and relatively inactive compared with the troops they mobilize. Are there more offensive combat structures in the resistance?

## B. Guerrilla Models

The mentality of the fighting men as well as the forms of organization that have emerged from the resistance can be classified in three models: traditional tribal warfare (especially in the south), imitation of the regular army (Hazarajat and northwest) and the borrowing of the theories of Mao and Giap (northeast quarter). These models have each evolved differently and have had varying efficacy due to the limitations of experience.

### 1. Tribal War

In the first chapter, we saw the traditional conceptions of war in the Pashto tribes.<sup>1</sup> We find in the initial uprisings and in the current forms of organization many traits characteristic of tribal war. It is a people's warfare in which every adult is a soldier and in which recruiting is the same as for civilian society. It is a part-time war in which one returns to the village for the harvest, for too long a mobilization of all warriors would paralyze agricultural activities. Whence the paroxysmic aspect of tribal warfare: a flare-up of violence followed by dissolution of the battle corps (*lashkar*). Tribal warfare is waged in a precise spacial-temporal framework. There is a time for war and a time for peace, a place for fighting (the *sangar*, the barricade) and a holy place (the village). It is a war of demonstration whose purpose is to show its value, not to achieve a strategic objective (destroying the enemy's live forces). Whence the strange parades facing a military objective (blindly firing on a post that one is not even trying to take, mobilizing dozens of soldiers facing another objective, this one photographic). The purpose of the military action is the booty, but the purpose of the war is glory and the recognition of the prerogatives of the tribal group. Military activity strictly speaking is secondary. One could say that tribal warfare is especially dissuasive and is waged against a background of constant negotiations. Finally, it presumes the continued integrity of civilian society. One does not burn villages, one fights far from inhabited places, one does not touch women and children and agricultural and commercial activities continue as if nothing were happening.<sup>2</sup> It is a war of peers.

How has this scenario operated confronted with the government and the Soviets? Every intrusion of the communist forces is met by a mass uprising of warriors which the government army cannot put down. In sporadic offensives, government troops have always lost face to a tribal *lashkar*. The two examples preceding the Soviet invasion are the Nuristan affair in the summer of 1978 and the offensive against Paktya in October 1979. In the former case, the government troops' use of tribal militia (*elejari*) made it possible to beat the Nuristani tribes, who won in turn when they had only the government battalions left facing them (winter 1979-1980). In the latter case, the elite of the Khalq troops were massacred by a Jadran *lashkar*. But the spatial-temporal framework of tribal warfare is not adapted to modern counter guerrilla warfare, in which there is no dualism between two times and two spaces: one for war and the other for peace. It is impossible to keep a tribal army in arms for a very

long time. The troops tend to disband as soon as the action has passed, especially since at such times, traditional rivalries between qawm and chiefs resurface. Furthermore, war can only last if village life remains nearly normal. Any attack on the village has a catastrophic effect on supplies and the morale of the men, which the English understood when they undertook their great campaigns against the Mohmand in 1916, 1933 and 1935: Blockades, the systematic destruction of crops and the bombing of villages made it possible to put down the revolt.<sup>3</sup>

One might suspect that the Soviets have not respected the deontology of tribal warfare, even if the *Khad* [political and secret police of Kabul regime, trained by the KGB] made full use of the tradition of negotiations. Tribal warfare is part-time and in certain places; war of the occupiers is all-out, with no pause or sanctuary. The villages have been bombed and the crops burned. This is why the tribes have emigrated more than other groups of the population, unable to immediately adapt to all-out war. And yet, there has been an evolution. First of all, the ideology of the jihad, very intensely lived by the warrior on the individual level, has been a good backfire to prevent the tribal interplay (rivalry of the qawm) from being totally manipulated by the *Khad*. The emergence of the ulema in many tribal segments has reduced the competition between the khan, which were the best vector of penetration of government influence. The ideology of tribal warfare (importance of appearances, whether because of booty or individual action) is modified in favor of an ideology of the jihad. The egalitarian sentiment, which is strong in the tribes, is strengthened by democratization of the *lashkar*. The khan yields to the alim and weapons, supplied by the party, no longer depend on the personal wealth of the soldier.

One can therefore observe the same professionalization in tribal areas as elsewhere, there where fighting is daily (Kandahar). Troops tend to stabilize at a level compatible with the continuation of a greatly diminished agricultural activity. The general mobilization is replaced by a kind of rotation: One brother is at the front, another in the fields, while the third works in Pakistan or in the Gulf countries. To spare the villages, the troops often withdraw to the *sangar*, where they stand guard interminably. The *sangar* will very quickly become an archetype of the entire Afghan resistance, except with Massoud. Armed groups of different sizes will hold the small mountain ranges, numerous but often separated in the south by plains accessible to tanks. Despite the appearance of many *toleba* fronts that transcend tribalism, both ideologically and with respect to recruiting, the political weight of the parties is not as great as in the north.

Tribalism mainly returns in the fighting tactics and the individual behavior of the soldier. However, one finds constants of Afghan society here, although they are more marked in the south.

The paroxystic aspect that has always marked tribal warfare is striking. Times of near apathy follow waves of agitation. Thus, from August to November 1983, masses of warriors attacked the Urgun and Khost garrisons, the latter very nearly being taken. When the government troops counterattacked in December, they reopened the road without noteworthy opposition. Fighting took place

between the harvests and winter, following which everyone returned to his business. Groups responsible for blocking the road were frustrated from any possibility of participating in the booty if Urgun should happen to be taken without them and therefore preferred to go home. There is no concept of strategy in the tribes. One fights for immediate, visible gain.

The sangar is still a tribal front, made up of warriors from the same qawm and remaining within their solidarity space. This symbiosis between the fighting men and the civilian population is accompanied by a separation of tasks. Soldiers do not intervene in civilian life, there are no real political structures and when the soldier returns to the village, it is as a member of his family and not as a member of the resistance. This separation in the tribes between civilian activities and the war means that the parties are not concerned with organizing the population. If there is a heavy attack, the people are left to themselves, whence the panic following Soviet offensives, as in Logar in January 1983, especially since the juxtaposition of uncoordinated sangar provides no effective structure of defense against an offensive waged on the basis of combined operations (tanks and helicopters). Tribal troops disband very easily but regroup just as easily once the offensive is over, since there is no destruction of military and political structures, lacking precisely those structures! Regrouping revolves around family relations rather than political affiliations. The local front is rebuilt by itself after the storm, whatever the state of disorganization of the region as a whole or of the political parties. That which makes the weakness of the tribal fronts also makes their strength. Tribal areas are a kind of eiderdown for the Soviets where everything has to be rebuilt at all times, with the segmentation into qawm and tribes (*qabila*) making the work of division easy, but the reconstruction of a government apparatus even more difficult.

And yet, solid bastions are emerging (Anardarrah, Jadran, Sharafat Koh, Kandahar), where effective leaders, usually ulema, have used the advantages of the spirit of jihad (politicization and transcendence of segmentation) and the strength of tribal bonds, which give armed groups great cohesiveness. The problems and perspectives are then not so different from other regions of Afghanistan.

## 2. Imitation of Career Armies

In Hazarajat with the Shura and in the northwestern provinces at the prompting of the Jamiat, one finds models directly patterned after the government army. The Shura went far in imitating the government model: compulsory conscription of young men at the age of 22, disarmament of the population and a monopoly of arms for the public force, and the constitution of a "guard" around Beheshti, essentially made up of the sons of sayyad. The scarcely mobile Shura army is divided into garrisons in the interior of the country and into fronts near the enemy. Practices of the government army have been taken up (marching in formation, uniforms, and so on); a permanent corps of officers, somewhat incompetent, because few Hazaras were military men, trains young recruits. Jaglan tried to create a corps of mobilized men at a ratio of one soldier for every eight families, who would feed him and pay for his weapons, but the system is very unpopular. This monopoly of the jihad by the dominant party has brought about a total demilitarization of the population, which does not participate

in the war. The other Shiite parties (Nasr and Harakat-i islami), which are more flexible, mobilize only their members. The Shura army has turned out to be ineffective.

The northwestern Jamiat has a strong officer corps of former career military men: Ismael Khan and Ala'uddin for Herat and Sayyed Akbar for Faryab are former captains. While keeping recruitment on a volunteer basis, they want to set up heavier units. As the basis of the military organization, they have taken the regiment (ghund), theoretically grouping 600 to 900 men divided into three battalions (kundak) of three companies (tulay) each. In fact, as always, the basic unit remains the group (25 men). The ghund have a garrison far from the fighting in Faryab, close to Herat. Operations are at the level of the kundak and therefore involve 200 men, approximately. The role of the committees is to ensure local security, while the ghund fight throughout the provincial territory. On paper, the organization into ghund may appear to be adapted to the need to concentrate troops in order to attack targets out of the range of the local committees, but in fact, the system is too cumbersome. The ghund do not have the necessary mobility to create any surprise effect. Their weapons, too similar to those of the local committees, prevent them from having any real concentration of fire. For example, the Ala'uddin ghund, the largest in Herat, had in 1982 only six 12.7 machine guns, three recoilless cannons and four mortars. The Lawlash ghund has a dozen 12.7's, one mortar and two recoilless cannons. The men remain immobilized in stationary garrisons, easily attackable. The effectively operational ghund can be counted on the fingers of one hand: one in Herat (Ala'uddin), two in Faryab (Omar in Lawlash and Karim Khan in Darrah-ye Zang).

If the idea of having mobile groups over the local committees is good, the structure into ghund lacks flexibility and is clearly premature compared with the military development of the resistance. Sooner or later, Jamiat officials will have to break up the ghund into smaller units and adopt a model closer to that of Massoud. However, the system of Ismael Khan is politically effective and permits a good symbiosis between the civilian population, local groups and "professionals." The ghund and the staff are maintained by Islamist intellectuals and urban ulema. The local committees in Herat are generally maintained by Sufis. The remote villages keep their traditional structure. In the Jamiat in Herat Province, the three levels fit together harmoniously. There is no aristocratic break between leaders and subjects, so clear in Hazarajat, and no latent militarization of the Massoud system. Once again, for the resistance, military effectiveness and political effectiveness are not mechanically linked.

### 3. Massoud Model

Massoud is the first military leader of the resistance to be aware that the Soviet counter guerrilla strategy is based on keeping the solidarity spaces separate and that the only way to deal blows is to coordinate simultaneous attacks on communications axes. In order to implement his strategy, he needs a military instrument and a political organization. We have seen how the Jamiat structure makes it possible to transcend segmentation. On this level, Massoud does not innovate. Militarily speaking, he creates autonomous mobile groups capable of acting far from their bases, but sufficiently light to be able to duck attempts at encirclement.



The system is based on the *qarargah* (base), which corresponds to the local committees. The *qarargah* has two types of soldiers: The locals (*mahali*) constitute a militia that provides security and defense of the territory in case of attack. There are several groups per *qarargah* and they retain their customary activities and a very routine level of weaponry. The best elements of the *mahali* are gathered together in the *grup-e zarbati* (shock group, one per committee, 33 men). A little better armed and regularly trained, they serve as the first echelon in case of attack, giving the others the time to counter-attack or retreat. Finally, one has the mobile groups (*grup-e motaharek*). Professionally trained, well-armed and provided with uniforms, they constitute units of 33 men, generally divided into three groups of 10, plus a commanding officer, an adjutant and a liaison man. Unlike the regular groups of the committees in other zones, the Massoud mobile group has no territorial base. Unlike the *ghund*, it retains a commando structure. It is light, truly mobile, and requires no logistical support outside of what the resistance has. Massoud's groups have demonstrated their efficacy by intervening as far as some 100 kilometers from their base (in Shamali, Andarab, Salang and Badakhshan). From the strictly military standpoint, it is the best formula between the immobility of the traditional committees and the cumbersomeness of the *ghund*.

And yet, imposition of the Massoud model presumes a kind of rape of civilian society. It is the first time in the resistance (except for a few attempts by the Hezb) that one sees soldiers evolving outside their solidarity space. If this evolution is accepted by the local population, the resistance will have taken a great step. Otherwise, the pacification methods of the Soviets, which postulate that a local population, placed between allegiance to a distant government and that to a rival but nearby group, will choose the former, will be effective. The entire problem comes down to determining whether Massoud (if he is not killed) demonstrates as much political intelligence as he has military. For example, a concrete problem is posed by the Andarab Valley north of Panjshir and also Tajik. The people of Andarab, traditional rivals of the Panjshiri, thus turned to the Hezb (under the leadership of a khan, Joma Khan), even the SAMA [Afghan People's Liberation Organization]. In the spring of 1983, tired of seeing the Andarabi blocking the Panjshir road with every offensive, or even speculating on grain, Massoud decided to conquer the valley militarily and to disarm the Hezb. The operation came about without bloodshed, but at the time of the Soviet offensive in 1984, it would appear that the old members of the Hezb rallied to the regime to gain revenge for their "defeat" by Massoud. One finds the eternal problem of the resistance: this race between segmentation and the extension of a political model. One test for Massoud is the attitude of the people of Panjshir, who remain remarkably loyal to him, but whom he tends to consider too much as just one more parameter. Massoud subordinates everything to the logic of military operations, unlike a leader such as Ismael Khan.

If Massoud's military model has been tried and tested, it would appear that the other forms of military organization correspond better to traditional Afghan society, which makes their strength and limitations.

## C. Tactics, Weapons and Communications

### 1. Tactics

The members of the resistance avoid the pitched battles, preferring ambushes, harassment of posts and political terrorism.

Ambushes are laid with one or two groups. Most of the soldiers remain protected, while the bearers of RPG7 antitank rocket launchers (rarely more than two per operation) approach to within 100 meters (the Afghans rarely use sighting systems). The road is previously mined; the attack aims at the head of the convoy or the rear. When the first vehicle is blown up, every bearer of rocket launchers fires one or two charges and withdraws. As soon as the forward unit has joined the protection echelon, everyone withdraws without orders or any special precautions. Ambushes are generally effective, especially because of the unwieldiness of the Soviet army and the lack of initiative of the soldiers, who, shut up in their troops transports, await the arrival of reinforcements.

Attacks on posts are clearly less effective. The Mojahidin never use the tactic of assault waves, which is totally contrary to their individualism. They generally prefer to infiltrate a commando from as close as possible, opening fire on targets and immediately withdrawing. Resistance soldiers use mortars very poorly, as they do all weapons with curved fire, whose usage is mainly symbolic. They spray the post with antitank rockets and shells from recoilless cannons, which are ineffective against trenches. Lacking artillery and 120-mm mortars, resistance soldiers cannot attack Soviet bases except when the complicity of the government troops enables them to infiltrate commandos, as was the case at Bagram and Jellalabad.

Members of the resistance do not have actual sabotage commandos, experts in infiltration and the laying of explosives on strategic objectives such as electric power plants. These targets are attacked very classically by rockets. Terrorism operations (*terur*) essentially take place in urban areas. In the country, they can only be aimed at government representatives without any connections with the local population, under penalty of a vendetta, unless a qazi has issued a fatwa of condemnation. In sum, while the combat group is quite distinct from the civilian population, there is, within these groups, no differentiation or specialization in terms of objectives. The resistance lacks technical cadres at the level of the drill sergeant. It lacks training and has an ideology of war that is undoubtedly too democratic (everyone is supposed to perform all tasks). For the Afghans, it is better to have 12 groups fighting once a year each than a single group fighting once a month, whence the immobility of the local committees.

The sangar is astonishingly fragile, for the most part. Until 1984, the Afghans did not dig. Now one finds trenches and antiaircraft shelters in the areas most subjected to bombing. Elsewhere, the natural grottos are the best protection. Naturally, some committees are better organized than others, but on the whole, it is an image of improvisation and casualness that prevails.

And yet, one must now derive an impression of military ineffectiveness from these observations. First of all, there are groups that are clearly more effective (Massoud, Abdul Haqq, and so on). Second, effectiveness is

proportional to the ineffectiveness of the adversary, which makes mistakes or does not exploit opportunities that present themselves. There is no Bigeard in the Soviet army. Finally and above all, the mere routine activity of the resistance, due to the number of soldiers and their link with the population, is enough to keep the Soviets and the government troops in their bases and therefore, calmly ensure political control of the resistance over most of the territory. If one postulates that every guerrilla war is first of all a political war, then that is where one finds the strength and effectiveness of the Afghan resistance.

## 2. Resistance Weapons

Uprisings against the communist regime have come about with the off assortment of weapons owned by the people. One might find weapons used in hand-to-hand fighting, flintlock guns and muzzle loaders alongside weapons from the English colonial army (from the Martini-Henri to the Lee Enfield). One also sees czarist, then Soviet Nagants and a few 1886 Lebel's. And yet, the weapons of the resistance have clearly improved. New weapons come from two sources: either taken from the enemy or purchased abroad, both of Soviet make or made elsewhere (especially in China). The proportion of weapons from abroad and those recovered varies considerably depending on the proximity of the border, so that there is a great disparity in the quality of weapons.

### a) Individual Weapons

The basic weapon remains the English rifle from the last war (Lee Enfield 303) and its American counterpart, the Garand, called "11 shooter" (*yazdah-taka* or *yazdah-tir*). They are valued for their reliability and precision at long distances. The problem is the high cost of munitions that must come from abroad. One also finds semi-automatic rifles from the 1950's: the Simonov carbine made in China, which the Afghans call the "10 shooter" (*da taka*), and the American M-1 (*m-yek*) among the Shiites, coming from the stock of the Iranian army. The AK-47 Soviet assault rifle is a standard weapon of the resistance, at least among the regulars. Called the Kalashnikov, it is highly valued. Munitions (7.62 caliber) taken from the enemy or sold on the black market by the Soviets are abundant. A new version that causes much more serious wounds because of its 5.45 caliber, has appeared on the market by the name AK-74, which the Afghans call the Kalakof. It is mainly found in Panjshir, for it comes solely from war booty, being used only by Soviet officers and elite troops. The poorest resistance groups still use the PPsh's (*papasha*), a very inaccurate submachine gun used at Stalingrad. A few G3 assault rifles come from Iran, where they are manufactured under a German patent.

One also finds the F1, RDG-5, RG42 and RKG-3M grenades (the latter called *farashuti*, antitank grenade), the so-called garnet or *bomb-e dasti* grenade. The revolvers are the Makarov and the Takarev (known as *titi*). All of these are taken from the enemy.

### b) Collective Weapons

First of all, one has the whole range of machine guns using the 7.62 caliber: the RPK, the RPD (called *sad-taka*, the "100 shooter") and the "Goryunov"

(known as *gurnuf*). These weapons are either taken from infantrymen or taken off of destroyed tanks. Next, the RPG7 antitank rocket launcher and its simplified version, the RPG2, are the standard antitank weapons of the Afghan resistance. Easy to use and plentiful, they now come from abroad because the Afghan and Soviet units on the front lines are no longer equipped with them.

### c) Heavy Weapons

First of all, one has the famous 12.7 DshK machine gun, known as the *dashaka*. Relatively light, quickly taken apart and usable without complicated training, it is the antiaircraft weapon par excellence. Relatively ineffective, it is very dissuasive if used in a concentrated manner because the Soviet pilots do not come down to low altitudes when they are sure of having to deal with the weapon. Munitions are very expensive. The DshK are either recovered from tanks or brought in from abroad (Chinese). The Afghans use them in a fixed manner and do not take them into operations. With the RPG and the AK-47, the DshK is the standard weapon of the resistance. Next, one finds, essentially in the east, heavy KPV/ZPU antiaircraft machine guns, 14.5 mm, with one, two or four cannons (Soviet or Chinese). The Afghans call them *zigo-yek*. Heavy, hard to carry and requiring special skills, these weapons are useful only where the resistance is well organized.

The resistance also has a few mortars (*hawan*), 82 or 81 mm, little used for lack of ammunition and skill. One also finds recoilless cannons (*tup-e bi paslagad*), 75 mm (Chinese) and 73 and 82 mm (Soviet). Here also, ammunition is scarce.

SAM-7's (portable antiaircraft missile) and 120-mm mortars are rare and lack skilled users. The qualitative limitations on military aid supplied to the Afghan resistance are therefore 14.5 mm for machine guns and 82 mm for mortars and recoilless cannons, insufficient to endanger the Soviet bases. This limitation is definitely a political decision.

### 3. Transport and Communications

Supplies from abroad, whether in the form of weapons, munitions or medicines, come through Pakistan. Quantities are astonishingly low. A front such as Panjshir receives little more than six convoys a year, and the Panjshir convoys are among the largest of the entire resistance: 50 to 100 horses, making a maximum of 10 tons a trip. A regular group of resistance members, including some 20 men, spends 6 months in Peshawar, long enough to pick up its shipment, generally consisting of a dozen AK-47's, an RPG with a dozen shots and a few Lee Enfield rifles. Bringing back a DshK is a major affair reserved for prestigious local commanding officers. Generally speaking, parties have no autonomous logistics, except for the great fronts of the Jamiat and the two Hezb. Commanding officers have to go personally to receive weapons.

Whatever the case, the fronts and committees have to finance the shipment of weapons themselves. As we have seen, there is scarcely any requisitioning and liberal society remains sovereign. To take but one example, the transport on foot of a group of 20 *mojahidin* and a DshK with its munitions from Pakistan



to Maymana costs 80,000 afghanis, or \$1,500. Arms are delivered either to party headquarters or to the Afghan border. Then the group must manage by itself. The only problems are the Soviet helicopters and ambushes, as well as the Hezb-i islami groups of Hekmatyar, which have made it a specialty to seize weapons. The other parties grant free passage to all groups, although a few little local leaders, such as Mullah Afzal in Nuristan, take their cut. The roads used are usually the traditional nomadic trails and those used to circulate goods before the opening of paved roads.

Paradoxically enough, the precautions taken are very elementary. Only precise regions such as Logar are crossed quickly and at night. This stems from the fact that the Soviets, despite increased pressure on the ways of communication of the resistance, do not have enough troops to close the roads. At any rate, the topography prevents any effective blockades. There is no Ho Chi Minh trail of the resistance, especially the further one moves south, where the desert does away with the very notion of any trail! A Soviet operation on a road has the effect of interrupting the circulation of convoys for a few days or weeks. It is not a catastrophe for the resistance. The level of armament is so rudimentary that supplies may be chaotic. The Soviets have only managed to block the direct route to Badakhshan by occupying Koran-o Munjan in 1982, because the altitude makes it difficult to establish other ways. Finally, the Afghans are not a people in a hurry: Taking 1 or 2 weeks longer is never a problem. In short, to stifle the largely autarchic resistance, the Soviets have to effect a quantitative (troops) and qualitative (techniques of detection) leap out of all proportion with the current level of their presence, but such a possibility is not to be excluded.

News circulates in the form of rumors, written reports (duly stamped, dated and signed) and by the BBC, which remains the best source of information of resistance leaders. There is no resistance radio. Radio Free Kabul has operated and been very popular, but scarcely lasted. Technical and personnel problems are too complex.

The isolation of the resistance remains great, not so much because of the danger as because of the time element. One cannot travel in Afghanistan unless one takes one's time. Everything takes a long time to decide and get moving. Even if the south and central region have vehicles, horses and walking remain the usual forms of transportation. It is a slow war. The Afghan resistance remains one of the most underequipped in the world, especially when one compares it with the political stakes it represents. As far as weapons are concerned, it comes far behind the Palestinians, Eritreans and the anti-Sandinists. It is a poor resistance and a war of the poor.

#### NOTES

1. See Chapter 1.
2. For a recent case, see A. Ahmed, "Pukhtun Economy and Society," 1980, pp 155-159.
3. Ibid., p 67 and the following.

## 14. Military Operations

### A. The War Map

For the Soviets, there are three Afghanistans<sup>1</sup>: strategic Afghanistan, the Iranian slope and areas of no interest. We know that the resistance has not been deployed based on strategic considerations. Rather, it is the Soviet disposition and strategy that determine the military activity of the resistance, whose willingness to fight is directly related to the presence of Soviet units in its space. When there are only government troops, a modus vivendi is established rather quickly. There can be no question of accounting for all operations waged on both sides in Afghanistan since 1980, but rather, of grasping the logic of the military trend, while drawing up an initial balance sheet in the fifth year of war.

#### 1. Strategic Afghanistan

Strategic Afghanistan somewhat resembles a sandbox with the Salang pass as the bottleneck. It includes the plains of northern Shibergan in Kunduz, the strategic Termez-Kabul and Kabul-Jellalabad road, the capital and its environs as far as Logar. It is a rich, heavily populated area with the only geological resources immediately exploitable by the Soviets (Shibergan gas and oil deposits and the Aynak copper mines in Logar). One also finds here the main urban centers (with the exception of Herat and Kandahar). It is the road to India.

The Soviets have built two of their three major bases here (Bagram and Kilagay). It is the only region of Afghanistan where they have set up a chain of little posts along the road. The essential portion of their contingent is concentrated in this area. Its task is first of all to ensure the security of the capital, then to keep the road open, and finally, to proceed to cleanup operations aimed at containing or destroying the bastions of the resistance.

This strategic space is bordered by bastions of the resistance, mainly Jamiat, but also Hezb, whose staffs are sometimes situated right close to the Soviet positions. In Mazar-I Sharif, it is the Zabi-ullah front that has the gorges overlooking the city (Tang-i Marmol). In Badakhshan, it is the Qazi Islamuddin and Basir fronts in Ishkamesh and Yaftal that overlook and regularly cut off the Kunduz-Fayzabad road, thus keeping the Badakhshan mountain region out of the Soviet strategic space. Then there is the Baghlan (Hezb-i islami, with Sayyed Mansur) and Andarab, alternately Hezb (with Joma Khan) and Jamiat. South of Salang, there is naturally the Panjshir front, whose mobile groups at the end of 1983 moved about freely in Shamali, Salang and Andarab. Most convoy ambushes at that time were their work. West of the road, the Ghorband Valley is solidly held by the Hezb. Kohestan is paralyzed by rivalries between the two parties, but Shamali, Jamiat for the most part, is very combative.

The fronts of the south and east of the capital belong to another resistance zone. The Kabul region has groups belonging to all parties, the most combative being the Hezb de Khales under the leadership of Abdul Haqq, which we shall see in connection with urban terrorism. Nangrahar is the bastion of the Hezb de Yunus Khales, well organized, very militant and combative. The staff is in

Tora-Bora, in the "White Mountain" on the Pakistani border. Regularly bombed, it is here that the first Soviet pilot was taken prisoner in July 1981. The main commanding officers are engineer Mahmud in Wazir, Dr Assef in Gandamak, Sayyed Husseyn in Naser and Toran Abderrahman in Hesarak (killed in December 1982). All are intellectuals. It is the Khales fronts that keep constant pressure on the base and city of Jellalabad. A Jamiat front is at Jigdalak, with Anwar Pahlawan.

The situation is more complex in Logar, the last element of strategic Afghanistan. The Soviets have a base at Pul-i Alam, in the Logar plain. They regularly wage great cleanup offensives. The political situation in the resistance is very segmented, but generally speaking, relations between the parties are good. However, the resistance has not been able to set up a joint military command. Consequently, the mojahidin retreat with every Soviet offensive and reoccupy the terrain almost immediately thereafter.

## 2. Iranian Slope

West of Afghanistan, along the Herat-Kandahar road, the Soviets have a major setup centered around the Shindand base, but much more static than in the east. The purpose here is not to hold ground, but to establish a buffer zone facing Iran and protect the land "aircraft carrier" which the Shindand base is, directly threatening the Persian Gulf. The long-term fear of Iran is attested to by the nervousness of the Soviet press since the ban on the Tuqeh in April 1983<sup>1</sup> and by obvious strategic considerations. Just as Pakistan will never be able to be a danger, Iran, which has an old national and state tradition, aspires to be a great regional power. The Soviets maintain a division in Herat, Shindand and Kandahar, but also airborne battalions in Bost, Girishk and Lashkargah. The number of airborne troops and secondary airports is out of proportion to the Afghan resistance which, although very active, does not threaten the Soviet bases. The Soviets proceed here by local cleanup offensives around their base. As in Panjshir, they do not seek to drive the resistance out of its bastions or to eat away at its terrain, but rather, to stifle a resistance that is more vulnerable because it fights in the open. There are many supporters of the regime in Adraskan and Lashkargah.

Between Kandahar and Herat, geography and tribalism mean that the local resistance fronts are made up of homogeneous and very distinct bastions, generally Harakat and separated by semi-desert spaces: Sharafat-Koh (Mullah Mohammed Shah), Anardarraha (Mawlawi Faqirullah), Qala-i Kah ("senator" of the Jamiat), Kajaki, Musaqala (Nassim Akhundzade), and so on. Herat is a more continuous and homogeneous space (Jamiat). Kandahar, the country's second city, has a wide diversity of affiliations in its oasis, but among the multitude of committees, a few Khales fronts (Obeydullah, Mullah Malang) or Jamiat fronts (Mullah Naqib) are emerging. Resistance members are very active in Herat and Kandahar, from which they regularly manage to control over half of the districts. In 1984, the Soviets undertook the systematic destruction of the approaches to Herat and Kandahar and the war daily rages with an intensity that has nothing to envy of Panjshir.

### 3. Afghanistan Outside of the War

A large part of the territory never experiences Soviet incursions. This is mainly the central mountain range, with the exception of Chakhcharan and Bamyan. The Soviets' latest attempt to cross Hazarajat was in the summer 1980, and that to reach Chakhcharan from Shindand in the summer of 1981. There are no government posts in the central region with the exception of the two just mentioned and Tulak, Tirinkot, Darrah-ye Souf and Obe. The city of Chesht was retaken by the resistance in December 1983. Nuristan, Upper Laghman and two-thirds of Badakhshan have experienced only sporadic bombings. Finally, the southern border (starting at Urgan) and the western border of Afghanistan (as far as Shindand) endure only intermittent patrols of helicopters and armored vehicles. Only the border post of Spin Buldak (between Kandahar and Quetta) and the capital of Nimruz, Kang, are solidly held by the Soviets.

These regions, vast and sparsely settled, are not considered strategic. They would be better left to themselves rather than to immobilize large numbers of troops that would be highly exposed because of the stretched out nature of lines of communication. Lacking any adversary, the network of committees of the resistance is weaker than elsewhere and the best elements often guard the "borders," waiting for an offensive that does not come. The disadvantage for the Soviets is that these regions supply the resistance with long but sure means of communication, along with a rear base and a source of supplies in case of shortages, while offering territorial legitimacy to resistance parties.

### 4. Special Cases

#### a) Kabul and Urban Guerrillas

Kabul is the only zone that the Soviets controlled satisfactorily. The secret police (Khad) are well-organized and has informers in all milieus. The urban guerrillas in the strict sense: underground terrorists in the city, were disbanded for several reasons. First of all, the Afgab people know absolutely nothing about clandestine struggles and are little disposed toward them out of a lack of discretion. As a result, in the sixth offensive against the Penjshir in the fall of 1982, the Soviets seized a list of 600 persons, the members of underground networks of Massoud, and it took a year to rebuilt them. The presence of brush a few kilometers from the capital puts the militants more at ease in open action and discourages the determination to set up a real clandestine network. Second, part of the intelligentsia in urban areas were linked to SAMA, an organization emerging from the Maoist movement. Execution of the charismatic leader of SAMA, Majid Kalakani, in the spring of 1980, dealt a heavy blow to the organization, which was followed by a political crisis, multiplrit splits, revenge and rallying to the regime, causing the disappearance of many underground networks. This does not mean that there is no more armed opposition in the capital, but that opposition comes from the nearby brush country. The activity of such peripheral brush zones (controlled by Abdul Haqq in the south) increased considerably in 1984. Usual operations involve small groups acting at night based on information. Their targets are government patrols, but mainly officers and party members or the famous regime sympathizers (singers on radio, ulema and the holders of honorary posts). Nevertheless, Abdul Haqq, based in Shiwak, wages operations inside



the city itself and on a distinctly higher level: attacks on police stations, factories, military posts and ministries, even the embassy of the USSR. The groups may have as many as 50 men, as in the case of the coordinated assault that took place on the night of 13-14 August 1983, aimed at Radio Kabul, Mikrorayon (quarters of the Soviets and civil servants) and the Bala-Hissar garrison. At the same time, Sam 7 missiles and rockets made their appearance.

Such pressure on the city is possible because the resistance has solid bastions a few kilometers away: Paghman, once a summer resort city in a mountainous region, held by supporters of Sayyaf (native of Paghman); Shiwaki, a southern suburb, and Koh-i Safi, a mountain range in the northeast. The Soviets have never succeeded in truly reducing these bastions, despite constant pounding of Paghman, where a series of posts covered by the artillery and helicopters has been set up. The cordoning off of Kabul is not truly assured, much less control of the back country. Finally, let us recall that the resistance has many accomplices in the urban population, the army and the administration. One must note a clear repugnance of the resistance concerning blind terrorism: no random bombings or indiscriminate machine gunning, except in places essentially frequented by regime agents (Pamir cinema, airport).

#### b) Paktya

Paktya is the only region where intense fighting has taken place without direct involvement by the Soviets. Until 1984, the Soviets avoided operating on the Pakistani border. If they no longer hesitate to put pressure on the border, they do not need a strong presence in Paktya, the only region where the government army is effective, for the elite is immobilized there. The best elements of the Khalq are from tribal zones, particularly in Paktya. The army has motivated elements there and knows the terrain. On the side of the resistance, the spearhead is the Jadran tribe, mobilized around Kezbe de Khales and led by Jallaluddin Haqani. Government troops hold Urgun, Khost and Jaji Maydan, where they have numerous sympathizers. The resistance blocks the roads (the famous Gardez-Khost road is strewn with destroyed tanks) and barely failed in the siege on two cities from August to October 1983. The war is highly tribal there.

#### c) Chakhcharan

A unique example of a Soviet base isolated in the heart of the resistance, Chakhcharan, provincial capital, has a bazaar and airport where a few armored helicopters are stationed, along with a motorized battalion. In addition, there are 1,500 inhabitants and a government battalion. It is forbidden to come and go and the base is constantly attacked by groups of the Aymaq Hezb-i islami, which is very poorly armed but combative (commanded by Sattar). The base defends itself by air raids on villages within a range of 30 kilometers. The civilian population has suffered heavy losses, but remains.

### B. Soviet Strategy and Conduct of Operations

The Soviet policy is aimed at gradually incorporating Afghanistan into the Soviet orbit, playing on the lassitude of the population and the slow but

continuous reinforcement of the government machinery in Kabul, without going beyond a war level that would force the USSR to drastically increase its contingent and that would cause regional tension to rise to an uncontrollable level. The Soviet strategy is based on the additional use of two instruments: a conventional army with good firepower and an Afghan political police force directly under the KGB, the Khad, whose duty it is to play on the traditional segmentation of Afghan society to stir up quarrels in the resistance and thus rally groups, not on an ideological basis, but based on local rivalries between qawm and between khan. These two elements have been used concomitantly since the beginning. At the same time, the regime endeavors to rally prominent persons and tribal segments. The first offers of separate truces and peace made to tribal chiefs date from the fall of 1980.

In the chronology of the fighting, we can distinguish three phases, corresponding to the reigns of Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko. However, one must not conclude the existence of radically different policies, because they are complementary. At most, one may speak of differing emphasis. The Brezhnev period is one of conventional operations in which the adversary is underestimated. Andropov is the triumph of the political and police path, while the Chernenko period is that of indiscriminate military pounding.

#### 1. Soviet Army

The 40th Soviet Army stationed in Afghanistan had some 1110.000 men in 1983. plus military advisers and at least three divisions situated in Soviet territory but intervening in Afghanistan. This army has over eight mechanized divisions and two airborne divisions reinforced by several brigades. The contingent has no special characteristic compared with the other Soviet armies: the same recruiting (multiethnic), the same arms, the same training. However, when one realizes that the Soviet forces are trained in an extremely rigorous but perfectly stereotyped and mechanical way for conventional war in Europe, one can understand why they are poorly adapted for counter guerrilla warfare. The main faults of the Soviet army are centralization, the absence of initiative, unwieldiness, weakness of the quartermaster corps, poor relations between officers and soldiers (and between raw recruits and veterans) and general irresponsibility. The soldier hates to fight far from his armored tank (in mountainous regions), there are no fighter commandos, no foot patrols. Morale is poor, except among the paratroopers, who are clearly more combative.

On the other hand, the Soviet army has very great firepower and has gradually learned to use its abilities in a more intelligent and coordinated fashion, without revolutionizing fighting tactics, military strategy or its own structures. naturally. Outside of the passive protection of bases and routes, the Soviet army has three missions. Routine activity is the "patrol" waged on the regimental level, moving slowly along threatened roads but without leaving them. Reprisals consist of air bombing or artillery shelling of villages suspected of harboring mojahidin, without any express will of exploiting the operation by a land attack. Finally, the typical offensive operation of the Soviet army is the combined land-air attack, which couples massive helicopter assaults on the rear areas of the resistance with a slow advance of armored units in order to catch its members in a trap.

Tactical improvements concern the speed of mounting operations, an increased capacity of helicopter troops transport acting without the support of tanks, the use of high-altitude bombers (TU16's) and slow fighter bombers (SU25's), more frequent ambushes, including at night, and a greater ability to unleash offensives in very different regions, meaning more rational use of fighting troops. The elite troops (paratroopers) are used sporadically. Obviously, they are being held in reserve for the prospect of action outside of Afghanistan.

## 2. Pacification Policy

This policy is followed through the secret police, the Khad. Far from a communist-type subversion, it is rather a matter of rallying local notables by playing on traditional tribal rivalries, inherited from the English policy of the 19th century. Prominent persons are offered prebends and honorary posts. They are grouped in the National Front (*Jebhe-yi padarwatan*) and the soldiers belonging to their *qawm* are turned into government militia (*malishia*, *watanparast*, *opratifi*). The Khad generally contacts a prominent person belonging to the resistance and whose rivalry with another chief is notorious. Contact is made through a sympathizer of the regime belonging to the same *qawm*. The Khad then proposes a mutual nonaggression "treaty." That individual is confirmed in his role as *qawm* leader, receives arms and subsidies without accepting any ideological condition. He must simply place his territory off limits to the *mujahidin* and allow the government to restore the government machinery. The purpose therefore is not to make revolution in rural areas, but simply to "pacify" in the strict sense: obtain the end of hostilities.

This policy is applied to rural areas and not to Kabul, whose population is the object of veritable Sovietization: Cultural alienation, break with traditional society, propaganda and long stays in the USSR are aimed not at local notables, but at adolescents who, it is hoped, will in the long run form the social base of the new regime. The Soviet policy wisely accentuates the gap between the city and the country.

Pacification has marked up some success in Herat (Shir Agha, assassinated by the resistance 3 years later), Shamali (Malang of the *Hezb de Hekmatyar* in Mirbachakot in September 1982) in Jawzjan and Faryab (Nurullah, *Hezb-i islami d'Almar*, rallied in the spring of 1983 before being assassinated by the resistance).<sup>2</sup> And yet, the pacification does not go beyond the perimeter of areas controlled by the regime.

## 3. Conventional War and Counterterrorism

The relative ineffectiveness of the Soviets stems from the poor liaison between the two aspects of their strategy. It is as if the Khad's program and the conduct of military operations were decided upon without any coordination. For example, militia set up with great difficulty are decimated by cannons from a Soviet base without the latter's moving an inch or, at the time of a Soviet offensive, the attack occurs as if it were a school drill, without any consideration for the complexity of the local situation. And yet, the Soviets are very well-informed about the positions and movements of resistance members, little familiar with the notions of secrecy and underground fighting. It would

appear that the traditional slowness of the Soviet troops, the excessive centralization of the command and the need for a previous program make immediate exploitation of intelligence by efficient combat troops difficult.

The Soviet press cites the example of officers speaking the local languages who are close to the population and who engage in social work,<sup>3</sup> but we have never seen any confirmation of this in the field. On the contrary, it would appear that the army strictly speaking behaves in a purely technical way and is not interested in the civilian population.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, any counter guerrilla strategy presumes the establishment of a native army and militia. But the Afghanistan at war drags its feet. Because of desertions, the government army rarely exceeds 30,000 out of the 100,000 men planned. It is unreliable, despite the presence of a few trustworthy brigades. Forced recruitment alienates thousands of young city dwellers from the regime. They harbor no spontaneous inclination for the resistance and desert as soon as they are enrolled. The local militias are very static and while they can prevent the resistance from evolving in a sector, they do not make it possible to set up mobile *harka* [mobile units].

#### 4. Chronology of Great Operations

While the fighting takes place everywhere, Soviet offensives always take place nearly at the same time (from May to June and September to October) in strategic Afghanistan, in Herat and Kandahar.

In 1980, one witnessed only major operations to clear the roads, without carrying in troops by helicopter. The convoys tried to systematically reopen the main roads: Kunar (February), Paktya (March), the trail in central Hazarajat (July and August), Logar and, very regularly, the paved road from Kabul to Kandahar, but they could not leave the roads. The Soviets also tried to free the space around their bases. The vicinity of Ghazni was attacked in May and the first two offensives against Panjshir took place (April and October). In November, it was Nangrahar's turn. The Surkhrud region was destroyed. In July, the Soviets proceeded to utilize massive quantities of small antipersonal mines on routes to Pakistan. It was mainly the children and livestock that fell victim to them.

In 1981, the Soviets reduced the field of their action and concentrated on clearing strategic zones. Helicopter-borne units appeared, but played only a marginal role. In contrast, air bombing became regular and intense. The zones targeted were the same: Logar (April), the Kabul region, with extremely violent fighting in Paghman (July), Kandahar (October), Nangrahar (offensive on Tora Bora in July). Panjshir experienced offensives 3 and 4 (April and the beginning of September). The results for the Soviets were disappointing, but there was major destruction and the flow of refugees to Pakistan increased.

The winter of 1981-1982 witnessed an intensification of bombing, coupled with encirclement of the zone involved by mechanized units that went on to reduce resistance. This tactic was used on Kandahar, Herat and Shamali. Civilian losses were high. In the spring, the resistance resumed its initiative on most fronts. The year 1982 was marked by two offensives against Panjshir



(15 May and 30 August), which in scope exceeded anything the Soviets had previously undertaken. For the first time, the offensive was based on helicopter units dropped on the crests in a matter of hours. Armored vehicles occupied the valley only subsequently and in smaller numbers than in previous offensives. These offensives were a failure and in December, the Soviet troops withdrew to the entry to the Rokha Valley. In August, the resistance slaughtered sympathizers of the regime who had come to celebrate the "liberation" of Paghman. In contrast, Logar suffered a June offensive that was murderous to the civilian population, which the military resistance could not protect.

In 1983, there was no great Soviet offensive. A number of cleanup operations took place in Logar (January), in which Dr Augoyard was captured, Herat (April), Ghazni (June). Shamali experienced extremely severe bombing in May and October. In Kandahar, the Soviets retook the Khakrez post, 50 kilometers north of the city. The year 1983 was marked by two events: the truce between Massoud and the Soviets and the siege of Khost and Urgan by the resistance. By the end of July, the Paktya resistance, still headed by Jallaluddin Haqani, laid siege to the two cities of Khost and Urgan. One new element: Tribes previously "soft": Mangal, Jaji, Tani and Waziri, actively participated in the fighting under the Gaylani flag for the first three and Jamiat for the second. This sudden activism coincided with the statement by King Zaher (22 June) calling for a single front and the rumor circulated that the royalists wanted to establish a provisional government in liberated Khost. It is certain that Gaylani received many weapons at the time. Khost was not taken and the local militia rallied to the resistance, at least verbally. But by October, the Tani withdrew from the coalition following tribal rivalries with the Jadran and, with the approach of winter, many soldiers went home. At the end of December, the government army from Gardez lifted the siege on the two cities and retook Jaji-Maydan. Two things must be noted: The soft tribes follow the characteristics of tribal warfare exactly, whence the alternation of victory and retreat. The Soviets did not intervene directly in the Khost battle.

It was in the course of 1983 that the political operations of penetration and rallying of the Afghan resistance culminated. One could speak of an Andropov political strategy that could have entailed at least an appearance of negotiation with the main resistance leaders.

In contrast, the year 1984 marked a return to a purely military conception of the war, but this time with a more seasoned army, clearly more troops and an unprecedented determination to hit hard. With the Panjshir offensive of 21 April, the Soviets unilaterally took a new step in the escalation of the war. A consequence of the failure of pacification? The effect of the general aggressiveness of Soviet policy in the world? Or a return to the good old formulas out of inertia? It is too soon to draw conclusions.

## 5. Offensives Against Panjshir

The first four offensives against Panjshir were very traditional and brought in only one armored column preceded by bombing. There is little difference with

operations mounted elsewhere in Afghanistan. The three other offensives (15 May to the beginning of July and 30 August to 15 September 1982, then starting on 21 April 1984) show, by virtue of their scope, the number of troops used and the tactics employed, that Massoud's Panjshir has become the No 1 objective of the Soviets in Afghanistan. These three offensives are built around the same scenario: The essential part of the operation depends on troops brought in by helicopter, often paratroopers, dropped on the mountain peaks, villages and passes. These troops are then followed by an armored column. In all three cases, Massoud's strategy consisted of withdrawing his troops into the adjacent valleys, allowing the Soviets to scatter, then taking the positions one by one, especially after being turned over to the government army.

In January 1983, the Soviets proposed a truce to Massoud. They undoubtedly thought that in exchange for local autonomy, he would not seek to leave his solidarity space, which, as we have seen, is a constant attitude in the Afghan resistance. But Massoud understood that it serves no purpose to hold bastions that do not threaten Soviet strategy because the latter consists of remaining only in useful Afghanistan. If one truly wants to have a military and political effect on the Soviets, one has to leave one's solidarity space and create a supraregional organizations. The constant pressure of Soviet troops prevented Massoud from carrying out his plan, but the truce did. We have seen that the conditions in the north are more favorable to the emergence of such an organization. While Massoud scrupulously respected the truce in Panjshir, he left to organize the northeastern fronts, disarmed the Hezb d'Andarab, rallied that of Baghlan (with Sayyed Mansur), sought to become allied with that of Kohestan (Niazi) and imposed his military model on the Jamiat commanders in Badakhshan.

The Soviet generals realized their mistake (unless the truce was imposed on them by the KGB). It was urgent to "break" Massoud. Furthermore, this isolated military need came at the time of a general hardening of the Soviet attitude: increased pressure on Pakistan and return to a purely military perception of the conflict.

The Soviet offensive against Panjshir was the largest operation since the beginning of the war. At the end of the offensive, the Soviets occupied one-third of the Panjshir Valley as far as the villages of Astana and Barak, as well as the Andrab Valley. Massoud was alive and most of his troops intact. The population of Panjshir left the valley.

The means used were clearly greater than those previously utilized and lead one to assume that the offensive was decided upon at the highest Kremlin level. Medium altitude bombers (8,000 meters), the TU16, laid a carpet of bombs on Panjshir. Their intervention was a first. The troops engaged numbered around 20,000 Soviets and 5,000 to 6,000 government troops. At the beginning of April, a commando from the secret police, the Khad, failed in its attempt to murder Massoud.

The offensive itself was launched on 21 April. Troops were carried by helicopter to the crests while an armored column went up the valleys of Andarab and Panjshir. Other troops were dropped by helicopter on Anjoman pass, deep

in Panjshir and Khost-e Fering, the alleged rear base of the resistance. The armored columns reached Banu in Andarab and Astana in Panjshir without any difficulty, but the Soviets failed in their attacks on the adjacent valleys, where Massoud's mobile groups had withdrawn. The Soviets suffered heavy losses. In May, the Soviets abandoned Khost-e Fereng, but established themselves firmly in lower Panjshir. Newsmen visiting Panjshir would see a valley destroyed and emptied of its population, but two-thirds held by Massoud's troops, more battle-hardened and determined than ever. The Soviets then turned to a new tactic: Units of up to 500 soldiers were dropped around a village by helicopter in the morning, without the support of tanks. The village was searched and resistance members on the Soviet list were arrested. The unit withdrew before nightfall. It then became more difficult for resistance members to concentrate their troops and to mount ambushes against such mobile troops.

The objective of the Soviets was not to occupy the terrain, but to destroy, or at least asphyxiate, the live forces of the adversary. They began by cutting off means of communication, then paths of retreat. They then attacked the heart of the enemy arrangement. Finally, they pursued the enemy to the adjacent valleys to force him to fight on the spot or fall in retreating to the heavy structure installed in the valleys and on the periphery of the region. What did the Soviets obtain? Precisely a return to the situation of the fall of 1982, on the eve of the truce, while suffering heavy losses. It was therefore definitely a failure for them.

How did Massoud avoid the trap? He knew the main lines and approximate date of the Soviet offensive, although underestimating its scope. His plan was clear: to empty and leave Panjshir, set up guerrillas in the northeastern quarter of the country while avoiding direct battle, and turn his entire effort on Soviet lines of communication, meaning the Kabul-Termez axis. He was always aware that the Panjshir Valley could become a trap. There is no more meaning in defending a bastion. One too frequently forgets that guerrilla warfare is not a war of position and that land won counts little. By November, Massoud began to proceed to evacuate the civilian population (some 30,000 persons out of the 100,000 which the valley had before the war). In February, he evacuated his troops, while keeping a curtain facing the Soviet base of Anawa at the mouth of the valley. On 20 April, the eve of the offensive, the mobile groups entirely destroyed a convoy at the foot of the Salang. When the Soviets attacked, there was practically no one left in Panjshir. Massoud waited for the Soviets to stretch their lines of communication and scatter their forces in order to counterattack.

Even if Massoud was surprised by the means used, he was able to withdraw and preserve most of his forces. Whatever the case, a Massoud working in the northeastern quarter was more dangerous for the Soviets than if he were enclosed in his Panjshir redoubt. Furthermore, the closing of supply lines is not an insurmountable problem, insofar as the very rudimentary nature of resistance weapons makes the resistance less dependent on outside supplies and as other ways can be opened up. They are indeed longer, but just as sure. It should not be forgotten that at the time of the truce, Panjshir received no more than six convoys a year! This offensive also revealed the reliability of Massoud's intelligence system.

## 6. Resisters and Soviet Prisoners

At the time of the invasion, the mojahidin considered any Soviet as a communist militant and took no prisoners. The attitude of the resisters changed along with the image they had of the USSR. Discussions with Muslim Soviet soldiers and the scarcely warlike behavior of all the soldiers (absence of fervor, lack of fighting spirit, the black market) convinced the Afghans that the Soviet soldiers were not motivated, had been deceived and were not interested in the expansion of communism in the world. At the same time, the fact that they had no money, stole and swapped their military equipment convinced the people that the USSR, far from being an advanced country, is poor instead. The Soviet soldier is therefore rather considered as a "poor guy" than as an enemy. Deserters and even prisoners who put up no resistance are almost immediately asked if they wanted to take up arms. Those refusing are easily turned over to the Red Cross, who has them kept for 2 years in Switzerland before giving them a choice between political asylum and repatriation. The Afghans would like to make trades, but the Soviets obstinately refuse. The change in attitude on the part of resisters dates from July 1981, when the Khaled partisans captured a pilot who was turned over to the Soviet Embassy by the Pakistani.

Soviet prisoners are always well treated. It is only in the Hezb d'Hekmatvar that they are subjected to strong pressure to convert. Then they are set free. Leaders of the resistance have understood the political interest of sparing prisoners. It improves the image of the resistance and encourages more desertions. But the attitude of the population is spontaneously friendly. It is not the smallest paradox of this war to see prisoners treated as guests. Prison is foreign to Islamic law as well as common law. One either kills or acts as host!

The number of prisoners and deserters does not exceed 100 from 1980 to 1984. The proportion of Muslims among them is greater than the percentage of the expeditionary corps, proof that Soviet Muslims are definitely the Achilles' heel of the USSR. It is likely that resisters will intensify their propaganda aimed at Soviet soldiers, even at Muslim Soviet republics.

### C. Long-Term Resistance Capacity

#### 1. Military Dimension

The resistance scarcely risks being crushed militarily. It avoids concentrating its troops, if only because of the segmentation of society. Even if the Soviets improve their mobility, they will not succeed in circling and wiping out a significant number of mojahidin in search-and-destroy operations. The very lightness of the military infrastructure of the resisters (absence of artillery, dumps, training camps and centralized staffs) means that there are no military objectives strictly speaking. The Soviets can only wage a war of attrition aimed at separating the civilian population from the resisters and stifling them once pushed back to the mountains. This presumes massive reprisals against villages when they harbor resisters and troop mobility in order to erase the population's feeling of being protected in a sanctuary. The problem for the mojahidin is to draft a more flexible articulation between



the military structure and the civilian population so that the latter may feel the increased pressure and presence of the Soviets, while keeping morale high. So far, as we have seen, resisters generally live among the people without truly having the possibility of protecting the people in the case of massive attacks. The existence of real sanctuaries, such as Hazarajat, stems from the Soviets' hesitation about occupying too much terrain and not from the military capacity of the resistance to prevent the penetration of Soviet troops. These sanctuaries give the resistance an illusion of invincibility that prevents it from foreseeing the following phase, one that will inevitably be initiated when the Soviets have increased their troop strength. In these pseudo-sanctuaries, the resistance lives out in the open and mingles with society. There is no clandestine structure and therefore, no flexibility vis-a-vis the adversary. One fights or flees. To date, due to the very sporadic nature of Soviet operations, it was possible to flee and return a few weeks later to recommence as before. But if the Soviets impose a more continuous presence, not by settling in one place, but while constantly operating mobile groups that remain only a few days or even hours, troops which, acting on information, systematically destroy the homes of the resistance leaders and carry out selective reprisal against villages, then it will no longer be possible to maintain a civil society that would operate in wartime as if nothing were happening. And yet, in Panjshir, as in Kandahar, the experience of armed groups living outside the populated areas is positive.

The resistance should set up an underground structure in order to leave an organization where the Soviets occupy the terrain. Being underground presumes that the resistance is built upon purely political criteria outside the existing hierarchies, for one cannot conceive of clandestine ulema or khan. Even if society has experienced noteworthy evolution during the war, one has not come that far. The relative rigidity of traditional society protects it against the ideological influence of the communists, but it makes it just as fragile in situations of crisis. This is why the Afghans constitute the largest refugee population on the planet. The rejection is massive, but the possibility of adapting to war is weaker and therefore, leaving becomes the only possible manifestation of this rejection. The second problem is that of the establishment of professionalized mobile groups, the only way to counter the increased mobility of the Soviet army. We know that it is always difficult for resisters to operate outside of their solidarity space, because local rivalries can then lead the people, hosts in spite of themselves, to rally to the government temporarily in order to get rid of the intruders. Even if these local shifts are provisional, they are enough to prohibit the establishment of a liberation army that can operate in a larger territory. Military problems of the resistance are therefore mainly political problems.

In fact, on the strictly military level, the two weaknesses of the resistance are weapons and the distance of communication with Pakistan. There are no heavy armaments, but this has meaning only in the prospect of the creation of a liberation army. Experience shows that the cannons which some local committees have are scarcely used, for they are incompatible with the tactics used by groups under the committee: Utilization of artillery presumes that one has gone beyond the committee level. As for ways of communication, the Soviets absolutely do not have the means to control them given the current state of

their troops. If they were to increase the number of the latter considerably, it would only be through the coordination and therefore, a centralization, of the mobile groups that the resistance could counter them. Here also, it is a political problem. And yet, control of the means of communication will always be an extremely difficult task for the Soviets, however effective the resistance may be.

War therefore offers two military prospects. Either the resisters do not cross the threshold of setting up a mobile army, and this case, the kind of war of attrition that we have seen since the beginning would continue without any notable intensification for years, with a growing advantage for the Soviets. Or the resistance takes that step and in such a case, the Soviets would face the dilemma: intensify the war or negotiate.

## 2. Political Dimension

One of the keys to the war is the race between factions to divide the resistance (encouraged by the Khad) and prospects of unification, but also between the consolidation of the regime and the vigor of the resistance.

To what extent can the resistance defend itself against the political penetration that comes about through the network of the qawm? The first defense is Islam, the regime being perceived as atheist. Next, segmentation itself constitutes good protection against infiltration. For example, an Afghan can only act in his qawm, meaning that a deserter infiltrated in would be sent back to his village, where he is known. Segmentation can also be turned the other way. Agents of the regime informing resisters do so through the network of the qawm and not the parties. In sum, while the segmentation is an unavoidable reality of Afghan political life, it can be manipulated. Everything depends on which way the wind blows. As long as the resistance is perceived as dynamic by the population and as long as it is more dangerous to be an agent of the regime than a mojahed, then allegiances will mainly favor the resistance. It is clear that the regime has managed to rally support when the situation of the resistance had experienced a deterioration that does not have to be attributed to the Khad, so numerous are local reasons for the conflict (in Shamali, Maydan, Gorziwan, and so on). The consolidation of the regime is a preliminary condition to the effectiveness of a penetration of the resistance by police and political means.

The resistance has the necessary universalist references to go beyond segmentation: a common ideology (Islam) and political parties. It is limited by the lack of intellectuals, the aging of the ulema and the vagueness of party structures. We have seen that parties can in fact be entirely determined by the segmentation into qawm, but inversely, a desire to impose parties and military structures of a national vocation too rapidly may encounter traditionalist elements and divert them to a regime that now plays upon prominent persons and tradition. The resistance must be careful not to violate civil society, as the communists did in 1978. This danger naturally awaits Islamist intellectuals such as Massoud. In sum, the two contradictory dangers are splitting of the resistance into local factions or the premature identification with a counterstate that does not have the means to impose its will. It is along the narrow path of a balance between these two extremes that the resistance must move.

Intensification of the war is unavoidable. It is in the logic of the Soviets, who do not want to give any more respite to the population so as to make the people remain neutral out of mere resignation. But it is also in the logic of the most active leaders such as Massoud, who must extend the war in order to avoid being caught in their bastions.

The resistance will only be able to survive through the extension of a relatively united political organization. The current trend is toward the rise of the Jamiat-i islami, which must ally itself with the Khales party in order to penetrate the tribal areas. This extension of the Jamiat goes hand in hand with expansion of the Massoud military system, limited to the north for the time being. Outside of the segmentation that prevents the very notion of a hegemonic party, the two limitations are the personalization of military innovation in Massoud, who has no heir if he disappears, and the absence of international support for a real improvement of the political tool of the Peshawar parties. The question of relations between the resistance and the outside world is a parameter that is more important than ever.

#### NOTES

1. See in particular the article by A. Davlekanov in the 3 August 1983 IZVESTIA. The Kabul government accused Iran of supplying air support for the mojahidin in Nimruz, while such an accusation was never made against Pakistan (see, among others, the KABUL NEW TIMES of 12 October 1983).
  2. As we go to press, we have learned of the assassination of Zabiullah by elements of the *beha'd* in Harakat, following the same pattern as in the Shir Agha de Herat affair.
  3. For example ETOILE ROUGE of 17 December 1983 (article by Filatov); Ibid. of 12 May 1984.
  4. Olivier Roy, "The Soviet Army in Afghanistan," PASSE PRESENT, No 1, 1982.
15. The Afghan Resistance and the Outside World

The Afghan resistance is isolated internationally. The difficulties involved in and the time needed to make a worthwhile stay (at least two months) limit the presence of seasoned journalists. Repression under Taraki-Amin caused many Westernized intellectuals to disappear. Former diplomats fled abroad and are in a poor position to speak of a rural resistance they know nothing about. The parties, mainly Islamist, have few persons acquainted with other countries. In the Jamiat-i Islami in Peshawar, only three members speak English. Within the country, the situation is even worse. Finally, Pakistan was long reluctant to have the resistance handle a diplomacy it intended to reserve for itself.

Nevertheless, three elements would have led one to think that the resistance would soon find connections abroad. First of all, since the Islamist resistance is rooted in the movement of revivalism running through the Muslim world, it should have been supported by the movement of Muslim Brotherhoods. Second, Soviet aggression should trouble governments in the region, particularly Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia. How did these three countries react? Finally, the Afghan resistance should have enjoyed the support of Western nations, led by the United States. What is the scope of such support?

## A. The Absence of Militant Connections

The Afghan resistance did not awaken militant movements of support in the West, lacking the sharing in or evocation of a common universal value in a historical rather than simply ethical perspective. And yet, the Islamist movement is definitely part of a militant movement shaking the Muslim world: Islamic revivalism. If that revivalism has not constituted a veritable popular and political movement of support, it is that it is itself in a crisis, failing to have clarified its relationship with established regimes and to have digested the Iranian revolution.

There is no Islamist "Komintern." There is definitely a common ideological matrix. But from the early 1970's, one can distinguish three opposing currents. The first two are political, but as in Afghanistan, move apart over the theory of the *takfir* ("Can one declare a pious Muslim a heretic because of non-Islamist policies?"). This would be the split of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers between the splinter groups who assassinated Sadat in October 1981 (Al-Jihad) and the "official" Brothers led by Shaykh Talmasani. In Afghanistan, it corresponds to the split between Hekmatyar and Rabbani, who condemned the attack. Iran would mainly support the former group. The third faction of the Islamist movement is less political and emphasizes the return to religion. It is more a movement of preaching than of political activism. One finds the organization Jama'at ul-Tabligh, of Indo-Pakistani origins and very active among immigrants in Europe, along with the World Islamic League (*rabita*), founded in 1962.<sup>1</sup> Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries distrust Islamist movements that are too politicized and that could challenge the legitimacy of regimes in the region and they support this third faction. Ties between moderate Islamists and purely religious associations are close and are through the intermediary of the Pakistani Jama'at, which has solid support in Saudi Arabia, and through organizations such as the Islamic Council, based in England and of which Ben Bella is a member. These different organizations verbally support the Afghan resistance, which does not maintain direct horizontal ties with national Islamist movements, with few exceptions. It must therefore go through organizations previously mentioned, which tend to treat the problem from the standpoint of Saudi Arabia and the Pakistani Jama'at and which are careful not to send representatives into the country. They duck the specific political problems facing the resistance, prompting the parties to demonstrate outward unity that would reinforce the myth of the monolithic *umma*. This hesitation also reflects the ambiguity of the Islamist movement, which waivers back and forth between mass action on political and social issues (as in Tunisia) that are consequently the subject of dissent, and support for the so-called Islamic regimes such as Saudi Arabia, the main financial backer for religious preaching and whose obsession it is to counter Khomeyniist populism, not hesitating sometimes to finance radical organizations.

Since the Soviet invasion, the Islamist resistance has avoided compromising with movements that would challenge political regimes favorable a priori to its cause (such as Tunisia). State support is better than the purely verbal support of organizations with somewhat vague outlines.



Consequently, if there are few direct relations between the resistance and the international Islamist movement, the Jamiat nevertheless preserves ties with the moderate Egyptian Muslim Brotherhoods, some of whose doctors have worked in the Peshawar hospitals, and with the former Turkish Party of National Salvation (*Milliyeti Necat Partisi*) of Erbakan, a former partner of social democrat Ecevit in the coalition Turkey headed in the 1970's. Young members of that party went over to the Afghan underground. It would appear that there are clear political divergencies between the Jamiat and the Syrian Muslim Brotherhoods. As for relations with the Islamist movement of the Maghreb, they are nonexistent. This quasi indifference of Arab Islamists to the war in Afghanistan stems from the caution of the governments backing them, always distrustful of popular movements that could get out of control (such as the pro-Palestine movements that played a role of internal dissent), as well as from the Arab centrism dominant in the religious or political capitals of the Muslim world.

And yet, it is possible that Afghanistan will become a popular cause in the Muslim world if the resistance manages to find propaganda channels without going solely through paraofficial organizations, but also, without identifying with extremist groups. It is a narrow path.

## B. Relations With Nations in the Region

1. Pakistan is now in the front line and must suffer the direct countereffects of the Soviet invasion: the economic and demographic burden of the refugees and political destabilization. Pakistan's spectre has always been to see the Afghan resistance become like that of Palestine and compensate for ineffectiveness in the field by the creation of a state within a state in Pakistan, backed by an army recruited among the refugees and acting autonomously on the international scene. Pakistani policy until 1983 was based on three principles: 1) controlling the supply of arms to the resistance and keeping it within limits not risking a violent reaction from the Soviets; 2) not promoting the emergence of an Afghan government in exile and therefore, maintaining the political division of the resistance; and 3) keeping the political initiative for itself.

Consequently, the Pakistani army directly supervises the essential portion of arms shipments, only a small part of which is through "private" smuggling. The Pakistani Government froze Afghan political parties in the spring of 1980, recognizing only the six Sunnite parties of Peshawar and dealing with the Shiites through the intermediary of the small leftist organization known as *Tanzim*. This does not mean that the other Afghan political organizations are banned. Leftist movements such as the SAMA, Reha'y or the Front of Mojahed Soldiers would have complete freedom to move. The Pakistani Administration does not hesitate to deal directly with certain leaders of the front or local commanders (such as Amin Anwar Khan of Nuristan).

The importance of the ideological factor in the choices of the Pakistani Government has long been overestimated.<sup>2</sup> Actually, the Pakistanis have not manifested any spectacular support for the Islamists, but have proceeded to allocate tasks. Relations with Islamist parties is through the Pakistani Jama'at, while the army dealt with moderate parties directly. It is the

initiative of Jama'at members, placed in prime posts, such as Abdullah, commissioner for refugees in Northwest Province until July 1983, that helped Islamists, essentially the Hezb of Hekmatyar. The latter has a privileged relationship with the Pakistani Jama'at, largely explained by the Pashto connection that unites the two parties. Relations of the Jama'at and the Afghan Islamists have been ensured since 1965 by Pakistani Pashto (particularly Qazi Husseyn). While the policies of General Zia and those of the Jama'at did coincide until the spring of 1983, they have different motivations. The Jama'at, like all Islamist organizations, has a purely ideological attitude, with an underlying network of personal relations. It recognizes only the alliance of Islamist parties and, like the Saudis, demands an outward unanimity that supposedly embodies the umma. Its favorites are Sayyaf and Hekmatyar. The Zia government has maintained an equal balance between the two alliances out of a concern for retaining control over the resistance, avoiding an imbalance that would favor the Islamists. Its motivations are in no way ideological. At the end of 1983, relations grew tense between the Jama'at and the government of General Zia, who replaced the commissioner for refugees with an apolitical civil servant. The Jama'at would then bring all its influence to bear on Saudi and Gulf financial backers so that money would be paid exclusively to Sayyaf, recognized as the only president of the only legitimate alliance. At that time, the Pakistani Government, while still refusing the principle of a government in exile, seemed more favorable to the appearance of a political entity of the Afghan resistance making it possible to shortcircuit private networks, such as the Jama'at, which have assumed a kind of right of investiture of the leaders of the resistance. But above all, it would appear that it is a change with respect to the prospect of negotiations that would bring about more flexibility in the Pakistani attitude over the question of the union.

The Pakistani Government has accepted the principle of bilateral negotiations through the United Nations (Cordovez mission) with the regime in Kabul (diplomatic relations have not been broken off). It says it is still willing to negotiate with the Soviets and does not stipulate the inclusion of representatives of the Afghan resistance. This conciliatory Pakistani attitude has received no softening on the part of the Soviets in return. On the contrary, the border incidents growing in number in 1984 in conjunction with increased tension on the border with India express a Soviet hardening. It would appear that the Pakistanis, especially when Agha Shahi was minister of foreign affairs, truly hoped that an agreement would be possible with the Soviets, but in 1984, illusions were no longer possible. The Pakistanis maintain their participation in the Cordovez negotiations in order not to exacerbate tension, but are strengthening their support for the resistance and seem to believe that the time has perhaps come to allow a political entity representing the resistance, one sufficiently autonomous to be credible, to emerge on the international scene, which would have the advantage, for the Pakistani Government, of no longer being in the front line on the diplomatic scene.

At the same time, a movement is growing in Pakistan to demand direct negotiations and the return of refugees to their homeland. This comes from a population overburdened by the weight of the refugees on the land, the water and the forests, but also on the labor market, and furious at the international

aid they are receiving. In addition, one has the campaigns of the Pakistani left (People's Party of Bhutto's daughter, the National Democratic Party of Pashto autonomist leader Wali Khan). But the more time passes, the more settled the refugees become.

Whatever the case, the Afghan crisis has definitely helped a certain economic development in Northwest Province and in Baluchistan, thanks to international aid. It has helped the Zia government internationally, but it has also worsened social and economic contradictions in the country. Pakistan is indispensable to the resistance as long as it does not receive anything from Iran. The current regime is the most favorable to the resistance and not for ideological reasons, for no Pakistani state, which considers that India is its worst enemy, can accept a stable communist regime in Kabul that would be the ally of India in the region, given that a nationalist Afghanistan dominated by Pashtos cannot fail to claim Pashtunistan and therefore, the northwestern border. The Afghan resistance is definitely Pakistan's front line of defense, but Pakistan is caught up in short-term problems that could lead it to restrict the activities of the resistance considerably, without having the power to eliminate it from Pakistani soil. The stability of the military regime, the rise or fall of the Jama'at, the coming together of opposition forces or, on the contrary, their centrifugal tendencies: All this constitutes an important key to the future of the Afghan resistance. There can be no Afghan policy of the West if there is not at the same time a Pakistani policy.

## 2. Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has no Afghan policy. Naturally, it fully supports the resistance, politically and financially. But while the Saudi Government assumes its responsibilities in the United Nations and international conferences such as the Islamic summits, it acts toward the Afghan resistance through private persons often linked to the Wahhabite preaching movement and distributes money more in terms of the level of its interlocutors in classical Arabic than their representativeness in the field! It is therefore Sayyaf who has so far enjoyed the favors of the Saudis, probably because he is one of the few Afghans to have studied, not only at Al-Azhar, but also in Mecca. The Wahhabite preaching that accompanies the support for the resistance is not the policy of the Saudi Government, which does not hesitate to give a passport to a chief as little suspect of Wahhabism as Gaylani. It is rather a matter of a kind of misappropriation by middlemen responsible for getting aid to its destination. Wahhabism is classified among forms of fundamentalism and the religious revival movements in Afghanistan are regularly described as Wahhabite.<sup>3</sup> And yet, a crucial point separates Afghan fundamentalism, and even Islamism, from Wahhabism: the reference to Sufiism. Wahhabism, which preaches a return to the letter of the text and is inspired by jurist Ibn Hanbal, rejects any form of Sufiism. Afghan fundamentalism, born in the Naqshbandi milieus and faithful to the school of jurist Abu Hanifa, accepts orthodox Sufiism, meaning that it rejects the lack of distinction between the creature and God. Since the 1950's, the Wahhabites of Arabia have founded madrasa in Northwest Province (the first in the village of *panj-pir*, which ironically means "the five Sufi masters"). The movement expanded with the Afghan exodus. Many young people were offered education and scholarships in the Wahhabite

madrasa before being sent to Afghanistan, where their preaching against the Sufis sometimes created serious clashes with the people (Badakhshan, Kandahar).

In May 1984, Saudi Prince Salman gave Sayyaf a check for \$10 million directly, announcing that he would no longer go through the Pakistani Government, another sign of the tension between Arab fundamentalist milieus and General Zia. The choice of Sayyaf, as we have seen, corresponds poorly to the ratio of forces in the fighting resistance. The evolution of Saudi policy toward the Afghan resistance is therefore also an extremely important factor for the emergence of a truly effective political organization, for the Saudis, while they do not supply arms, furnish most of the financing of the resistance.

### 3. Iran

Iran has always paid lip service to the resistance and has refused to get involved in the Cordovez negotiations as long as the soldiers were not present (declaration of 24 September 1981). Likewise, the Afghan political parties, with the exception of the royalists, can have their offices in the main cities. Both refugees and soldiers may cross the border freely.

And yet, Iran does not help the Afghan resistance. The only material aid, meager at the outset, goes to Shiite groups that recognize Khomeyni's line. Parties based in Peshawar do not have the right to ship arms and munitions through Iran, which poses insurmountable logistical problems for the Jamiat-e Islami of Herat. The refugee population in Iran, whose numbers are unknown, are the target of much tighter police control than in Pakistan. There has never been any Iranian contingent in Afghanistan and certainly not in Herat at the time of the March 1979 uprising, as the Kabul regime tried to make people believe. How is one to explain this Iranian attitude? First of all, by the traditional scorn which the Iranians have for the Afghans, which did not start with Khomeyni. The Afghans have always been Iran's immigrants and there is not a single murder, theft or rape not attributed to them. Furthermore, Iran, obsessed with its fight against the great American Satan and Iraq, does not consider the Afghan question to be of prime importance. Finally, if one tries to fit Iranian policy into its regional context, one sees that Iran, while proclaiming the need for a universal Islamic revolution, only "works" the Shiite communities, whether it be a question of Lebanon, Iraq, Bahrein or Afghanistan. Action is in three phases: First of all, Iran supports the Shiite community as a whole, then only the groups that recognize the primacy of Khomeyni, and finally, only those that agree to be integrated into the organization of the Iranian Pasdarans. It is this evolution that largely explains the split in Lebanon between the *amal* of Nabi Berri and the "Islamic" *amal* of Mussawi. In Afghanistan, the Iranians do not hesitate to send delegations of Pasdqrans, generally to the Shiites (but Massoud received one in the spring of 1983), responsible for pushing the mojahidin to break with the Peshawar parties and set up Afghan Pasdarans or *hezbollah* (Party of God) sections. This policy has succeeded, as we have seen, in certain places along the border and in Hazarajat. And yet, it is clear that Iran is not seeking to control the entire Afghan resistance. Parties such as the Jamiat-e Islami are in control but deal with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs! For Iran, it is more a matter of asserting its lordship over the Shiite minorities and of integrating them into its policy of regional expansion, for behind the words, Iranian policy resembles Persian nationalism more than it does a universalistic-type revolution.



And yet, with the elimination of the Tudeh in April 1983, Iran's attitude clearly hardened with respect to the USSR and the Kabul regime, without any accompanying improvement in material aid. Large sectors of the Afghan resistance are awaiting the end of the Iran-Iraq conflict in order to receive increased aid from the Tehran regime. Whatever the case, no matter what ideological divergencies may exist, the Afghan resistance must keep in contact with the Iranian regime, which will be a decisive element in the Middle East for resisting Soviet penetration.

#### 4. Egypt and the Other Arab Countries

President Sadat was the only Arab chief of state to demand military aid for the Afghan resistance (in an interview of 22 September 1981 with NBC). He was assassinated a few days later. Since that time, Egypt has given no more arms to the Afghan resistance. The Gulf countries are aligning themselves with Saudi Arabia. The other Arab countries, while regularly voting in the United Nations for the withdrawal of the Soviets (with the exception of Syria, Libya and South Yemen) have no direct relations with the Afghan resistance.

#### C. Relations With the West

The Soviet invasion has challenged the dogma of detente. Governments that based their policies on that dogma, such as Schmidt's Germany and V. Giscard d'Estaing's France, have tended to minimize the scope of the invasion. The United States reacted more violently, as we know. And yet, it is almost only in France that one seems a movement of opinion favorable to the resistance. In the United States and England, public opinion remains passive, even if the government does act. In Italy, a movement of opinion is discernable, particularly on the left, because the Italian Communist Party has made the Afghan question one of the criteria of its separate stance vis-a-vis the USSR, even though the government has made no move. In Germany, Greece and Spain, neither public opinion nor the government has moved.

With the Soviet invasion, a multitude of spokesmen of the resistance emerged in all the Western countries, often with such pompous, empty titles as "general coordinator of the resistance." If one eliminates "folkloric" cases, which unfortunately still enjoy some credit in circles remaining sensitive to folklore (out of mimicry or exoticism), most of these spokesmen are either former Maoists or royalists. From 1980 to 1982, they monopolized the representation of the resistance and were classified under a scarcely Afghan left-right political distribution, with the Maoists trying to revive the movements of support that were the heyday of the 1968 anti-Americanism and the royalists frequenting the salons and corridors of the ministries. And yet, However, an increasingly obvious lack of symmetry pitted them against one another: The Maoists no longer represented anything after 1982 (repression of the urban networks and a crisis of the Nimruz and Nuristan fronts), while the royalists still embodied a diplomatic option usable in the prospect of a search for a political solution by the Soviets. The message of the royalists was coherent: "Whatever our military strength, we represent the only political solution acceptable for the Soviets if they want to withdraw, because we have legitimacy and under the old regime, we gave all the pledges of nonalignment and respect for the interests of the USSR." This calculation and the absence of representatives of the Islamist resistance

would give weight to the royalist emigres, whose approach culminated in the appeal of King Zaher appearing in the 22 June 1983 issue of LE MONDE. However, while one may have been able to harbor some illusions about Andropov, it is clear that Chernenko rejects any real discussion. With the royalists incapable of setting up a grand jirga that would have supplied a political base for their attempt, the wheels turn and Western governments are more interested in the Islamist parties and particularly the Jamiat, with no more doubt that it now represents the most dynamic and most militarily powerful faction of the Afghan resistance.

This reevaluation of the ratio of strength in the Afghan resistance stems from several factors: first of all, better information about the reality of the domestic fronts,<sup>4</sup> then from a better appreciation of Soviet obstinacy, which means that any political solution is premature, and finally, from a reevaluation of the regional dimensions of the conflict. This last point is important because it introduces a regional dimension into the conflict between the purely local aspect (revolt against a communist regime) and the East-West game (Soviet expansionism). As we have shown, the Afghan resistance fits into the movement of political revivalism shaking the Muslim world and which is far from being reduced to a mere extension of fanaticism. The best bulwark against Soviet influence remains the Islamist people's movement and the West must avoid considering a popular movement as being hostile to it a priori, for it would then be doomed to supporting puppet regimes.

And yet, the United States, where the royalists remain influential, cannot see the interest of politically promoting the Afghan resistance. As it often does, it sees things from a strictly technical standpoint (military problems) or from a symbolic angle (finding a presentable representative of the resistance, even if he is a puppet), but the idea that a guerrilla force needs a political organization above all escapes it. However, after the vote on the Tsongas resolution of 4 October 1984 by Congress, American support for the resistance seems to be growing.

In sum, if the real resistance has made inroads in the Western world, particularly starting in France, it is far from enjoying the political support and infrastructure abroad that one finds in many other highly diverse liberation movements. The Afghan resistance is underrepresented abroad out of a lack of competent cadres, but also because of the lack of interest of Westerners in the indissociable political aspect of any guerrilla war.

#### D. Prospects of Negotiations

What is negotiable in the Afghan conflict? For the resistance, everything, except the continuation of a communist regime in Kabul. For the Soviets, many things, except the disappearance of a communist regime in Kabul. This is enough to resituate rumors of negotiations in their real context. Unless there is a drastic change in the foreign context or the political situation in Moscow, there will be no real negotiations. In that sense, the Cordovez negotiations, which every year bring Pakistanis and Afghan communists together in Geneva through the United Nations, have no future. And yet, outright war is not unavoidable. One can imagine scenarios that would enable the USSR to preserve only that which interests it, without explicitly giving up the

dogma of the irreversibility of socialism. The maximalist hypothesis is the continuation at all costs of a regime such as that of Babrak (a so-called "democratic front" regime that permits all outward adjustments). The other minimum hypothesis is the establishment of a royalist-type government, with the continuation of communist ministers and Soviet bases, which would have the effect of dividing the resistance in two and turning outside aggression into civil war. The middle hypothesis is that of a de facto partition of the country along the Hindu-Kush, the north being gradually incorporated into the USSR and the south constituting a tribal no-man's land, a factor of destabilization of Pakistan. In short, in the last two scenarios, it would be a matter of using the constant cleavage that we have noted between the north and the south, but such a solution would be essential if the north were less combative and therefore, most digestible than the south. However, the opposite is true. Whatever the case, Chernenko's inert traditionalism excludes any search for an original solution. Force remains the only recourse. Can one expect anything else from his successor?

One must therefore admit that there is no prospect of negotiations at present. Afghanistan's future is first of all being played out on the "barricades," the sangar, and then against the backlash of the war on the Soviet system and on the regional situation of the USSR. The USSR cannot decide so easily to wage all-out war, for its entire military apparatus would have to be rearranged. It must pull troops out of Europe and off the Chinese border. The more it intensifies the war, the more it worsens the political risks it takes, first of all, by cutting itself off from Muslim international opinion, which will undoubtedly not remain as passive as it is today, but also by increasingly disturbing its own Muslims, who we know are fascinated and informed about what is happening in Afghanistan. For the Soviets, everything depends on the Afghanistanization of the war and therefore, the establishment of a stable regime in Kabul. But if the resistance cannot militarily defeat the Soviets, it can, through its fighting spirit and its political and ideological dynamism, prevent the establishment of a stable regime in Kabul. Such are the stakes of the war, more than the battles so difficult to report on. So far, the resistance has been fairly successful, but there is a race between its reinforcement and that of the regime, with the Soviets trying to avoid the expansion of the resistance by playing on the lassitude of a sorely tested population. It is therefore to the extent that the resistance fits into Afghan history, embodies a popular movement and ideology and anchors itself in civil society that it can hold up, confronted with a regime that has but the legitimacy of its might. It is also a race between the factors of unification of the resistance and the forces of segmentation. Passage to the political phase is the vital condition in order for the resistance to emerge. That is the background that we have tried to reconstruct in this book.

The war in Afghanistan will be long. Whatever its outcome, one will see later that it does not mark just one more step in Soviet expansionism, but a qualitative shift. From an apparently local war, as the Caucasus guerrilla wars for nearly a century, it will perhaps become the symbol of a new type of people's war, one that does not find its model in a somewhat adapted Marxism, but rather, that marks a definitive break between people's uprisings and fascination with the USSR. The USSR is no longer the objective ally of Third

World peoples. The war in Afghanistan is comparable to the Rif war, which, behind its outward aspect of a tribal uprising, prefigured the future liberation movements. It is not an accident that, as we have said, the Rif war is the Muslim guerrilla warfare that presents the most affinities with the Afghan resistance, decidedly very different from the basmachi of Central Asia. In 1918, the Bolsheviks were in the "direction of history." Today, the empire is expanding but running out of breath. One must see the war from a historical standpoint, one that ranges beyond the mountains and the deserts where men have decided to fight even before they wondered about their chances of success!

#### NOTES

1. In an article, Georges de Bouteiller presents precisely this organization as a kind of Islamist Komintern, a typical example of a phantasm shared in France (DEFENSE NATIONALE, January 1984, p 37).
2. See, among others, P. Metge, "When Foreign Aid Obstructs Unity," LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE, April 1983. P. Metge totally distorts the reality of the Afghan resistance, which he knows second-hand and through presumably ill adapted policies. See also Laurence Lifschultz, Selig Harrison and Fred Halliday.
3. Thus, the movement of Barelvi (see Chapter 3) is called Wahhabite by O. Caroe, "The Pathans," 1973, pp 301-302.
4. We mentioned these "fronts" in Chapter 10.

#### GLOSSARY

acabiyya: Arabic term meaning esprit de corps, that is, membership in a solidarity group.

'adat: custom, common law, habit.

akhundzade: descendant of a religious personage, very often of a pir.

alim (plural: ulema): doctor of law, a general term designating one who has completed higher studies in a madrasa.

amir: chief; in the resistance, one who has civilian and military power.

arbab: in the central and northern regions, equivalent to malek.

ashari: having to do with Ash'ari, a theologian born in 874, who tried to reconcile traditionalist fideism and rational theology.

Aymaqs: Sunnite Persian-speaking people, often semi-nomadic, inhabiting central Afghanistan (Ghor Province).



ayyar: bandits of honor in Persian tradition. The word formerly designated the "chevaliers," the "paladins" (as in the book "Samak-e Ayyar," reprinted by Maisonneuve et Larose in 1972). It has the meaning of Robin Hood.

badal: vengeance in the pashtunwali.

Baluchis: ethnic group on the border of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. An Iranian language of the northwest is spoken, but it has Brahui groups (Dravidians).

barakat: beneficent holiness that emanates from certain persons or objects; sanctification occurs by contact.

bari: in Nuristan, a caste of slaves collectively owned by the village community and specializing in carpentry.

basmachis: Muslim resistance opposing the Bolsheviks in Soviet Central Asia (1920-1936).

baten: esoteric content of divine revelation, which can only be attained by mystical initiation and not dogmatic theology.

bay (or beg): in the north, equivalent to khan.

bid'at: innovation in religion; for traditionalists, a grave sin.

buzkashi: rather violent game played by the Afghans of the north. Two or more teams of horsemen must place a decapitated goat in a circle.

Cheshtiyar: Sufi brotherhood mainly in the Indian subcontinent, but very active in Afghanistan around the city of Chesht-i Sharif (Herat Province).

dar al-makhzen (opposite of dar as-siba): The Makhzen country is the part of Moroccan territory under the control of the sultan, through his army and a skeleton administration, generally made up of local notables integrated into the state structure. The Siba country is made up of tribal zones in which village communities are autonomous, but where political segmentation reigns.

da'wat: religious preaching; in the modern sense, the word often has a political connotation.

dawlat: the state; the place of transcendence of power, in contrast to the state apparatus (hukumat).

dehqan: peasant in general, but usually means sharecropper.

dihgan: recently Pashtonized populations, sometimes still Persian-speaking, nontribalized and living in the midst of Pashto tribal areas (Kunar, Urgan).

din-e ilahi: religion officialized by Mogol Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) and aimed at syncretism between Hinduism and Islam.

Durrani: Pashto tribal confederation in the southwest from which the royal family springs.

fakir: a "poor," wandering religious figure; sometimes synonym for pir.

faqih: jurist, expert on the fiqh.

fatwa: legal consultation given on a precise point by a sheykh ul islam, meaning a qazi of higher rank.

fiqh: Muslim law.

National Front: Jebha-ye Padarwatan, organization set up by the Khad to rally officials to the regime outside the Communist Party.

futuwwa: brotherhood of young city dwellers in medieval Islam, especially Persia and Iraq, and which waivers, depending on the times and interpretation, between a kind of knighthood and a gang of hoods.

geraw: property that one takes as security on a loan and whose use one enjoys until the capital is paid back.

ghausi: Sufi brotherhood scarcely represented in Afghanistan.

ghazi: one victorious in the fight against the infidels.

ghilzay (ghilji): Pashto tribal confederation of the southeast.

ghund: regiment.

Gujars (Gujurs): ethnic group of Indian origin living nomadically in the northeastern mountains of Afghanistan.

hadith: words or attitudes of the Prophet, reported in verses of scripture the study of whose authenticity is an entire science.

Hanafite: legal school that follows the interpretation of Abu Hanifa (9th century of the Christian era); the most widespread and the most liberal.

harka: mobile unit of Indian auxiliary troops in Algeria (the harkis).

Hazaras: Shite population exhibiting Mongoloid traits, of uncertain origins and occupying the center of Afghanistan (Hazarajat: provinces of Bamyan and part of Ghazni, Oruzgan, Ghor, Jawzjan, Balkh, Samangan, Baghlan, Parwan and Wardak).

hejrat: exodus, hegira; exile of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina.

hujra: guest room and meeting place or reception hall for strangers, especially in tribal zones.

hukumat: state apparatus, the government.

ijaza: authorization, the investiture of a student by his teacher.

ijma: consensus of believers permitting an interpretation of law in cases not foreseen by the Revelation or the sunnat. According to certain schools, it designates only the consensus of the ulema.

ijtihad: effort of personal interpretation, whose use is reserved either for the four great historic mojtahed (Hanifa, Malik, Shafe'y, Ibn Hanbal) among the Sunnites, or for the doctors of law among the Shiites.

ikhwan: Ikhwan al-moslimin, Muslim Brotherhood, name taken by the first Islamist organization founded in Egypt by Hassan Al-Banna and taken up by the adversaries of the Islamists to designate movements of that affiliation.

iqta: act of transferring the state's fiscal rights on land to a private party (usually a military person); fief, without hereditary transmission.

Ismailism: Shiite sect recognizing the seventh imam as the hidden imam (instead of the 12th for orthodox Shiites). Ismailism has developed a complex mystical gnosis.

jabha: front, in the military and political sense.

jagir: equivalent of iqta among Mogul sovereigns and therefore, in Afghanistan. The jagirdar is a khan or general to whom the state has granted its fiscal rights over land.

Jama'at: Pakistani Islamist political party founded by Mawdudi (1941).

jerib: agrarian unit of measure worth a little under .2 hectare.

jirga: assembly of men in Pashto tribal areas. The mirga may include all warriors or only the malek and elders.

kafir: infidel.

kalam: speculative theology; philosophy applied to the Revelation.

kemp: camp, soldiers base in the south.

Khad: initials of the Khedamat-e Ettelahat-e Dawlati, secret political police of the Kabul regime, trained by the KGB.

khalifa: successor, lieutenant; one who succeeds a pir.

Khalq: "The People," faction of the Democratic Party of the Afghan People (communist) after the 1967 split. Supplied the first two leaders of the revolution (Taraki and Amin), before being replaced by the pro-Soviet Parcham.

khan: generally a landowner heading a large group of relatives and clientele, which he supports by providing food and services; the leader of a tribal segment (clan or tribe).

khanaqah: place where Sufis practice their spiritual exercises.

kheyl: clan, subdivision of a Pashto tribe, whatever the level of that subdivision.

khilafat: office of the khalifa; caliphate: the incarnation of the spiritual and temporal succession of the Prophet (particularly among Ottoman sovereigns); movement for restoration of the caliphate, very active in India around 1920.

Khorassan: province in eastern Persian that included Herat; cradle of classical Persian culture.

khotba: Friday sermon; traditionally in the name of the reigning sovereign, whose legitimacy is thus marked.

khwaja: descendant of one of the first caliphs; master.

kizilbash: "red head," Shiites of the Afghan cities, Persian-speaking and the descendants of Turkish contingents left by Iran in the 18th century.

koka: brotherhood of hoods in Kabul.

lashkar: armed corps formed by the levying of tribes.

madrassa: higher religious school.

mahr: dowry; legally speaking, security paid to the woman so that she may have something to live on if repudiated.

maktab: either a primary religious school (in contrast to the madrasa), or a school in general (therefore, government school).

malang: wandering mystics, living from begging and selling amulets.

malek: village chief, elected by the elders.

Mahrattes: Hindu confederation that fought in the 18th century against the Mogul Empire and that was beaten by Babur at Panipat.

ma'mur: civil servant.

markaz: center, place where the resistance committee is set up.

masjid: mosque.

maslahat: public property; notion of Muslim law that authorizes the sovereign to legislate even in the absence of any precise prescriptions from the sharia.

mawlawi: in Afghanistan, designates an alim.

mellat: the nation in contrast to the state; religious group defined by respect for its own laws (Muslim, Christian, and so on).



melmastia: in Pashto, hospitality.

mirab: personage elected and made responsible, for pay, for enforcing water rights.

mlatar: in Pashto, clientele of a khan.

mo'allem: teacher in a government school.

modarres: teacher in a madrasa.

Moguls: Muslim dynasty founded by Babur, of Turkish origin and having conquered India from Kabul. It reigned in India from the 16th to the 19th century.

mojahed: in the plural, mojahidin; one who wages the jihad, or holy war.

mojtahed: one authorized to practice ijtiḥad. There are no more among the Sunnites. Among the Shiites, designates the great ayatollahs.

monism: any theory affirming the identity between the creator and the creature, between the self and God.

moqi: among the Ismailis, equivalent to pir, teacher, a temporal as well as spiritual leader.

motaharek: mobile, mobile group.

motazilism: school preaching the rationalist interpretation of theology and the use of philosophy (9th century).

mukhlies: disciple of a pir, without any personal initiation; more social than spiritual sense: follower, servant, client.

Munjanis: small ethnic group in Badakhshan, converted to Ismailism.

murid: disciple of a pir whose personal initiation he receives.

myan: in tribal areas, a religious personage, under the sayyad (the myan is not a descendant of the Prophet), but who plays the same intermediary role in conflicts.

Naq'hbandiyya: Sufi brotherhood founded in the 14th century by Baha'uddin Naqshband (the dyer).

Nehzat: Islam renaissance movement.

Nuristanis: ethnic group in the northeastern mountains of Afghanistan; converted only at the end of the 19th century.

padshahgardi: the "game of kings," succession of amirs on the throne.

Panjpīr: Pakistani village where a Wahhabite madrasa was founded around 1950.

Parcham: "the flag," faction of the Democratic Party of the Afghan People (Communist Party), which split in 1967. Led by Babrak Karmal, it opposes the Khalq.

Pashto: language of the Pashto (Iranian branch of the east).

Pashto: dominant ethnic group in Afghanistan, living in the south.

pashtunwali: both ideology and common law of the Pashto tribes.

paygah: base; another name for committee.

payluch: "barefoot," brotherhood of hoods in Kandahar.

pir: "the old man," Sufi spiritual master, who derives his legitimacy from an initiatic chain (selsele).

potlatch: Indian term of North America: gifts of prestige by which a notable asserts his authority over those who do not have the means to give.

qabila: tribe, in contrast to kheyli, always designating a great established tribe.

Qaderiyya: Sufi order founded by Abdul Qader Gaylani in the 8th century.

qalandar: wandering mystic often belonging to a Sufi order.

qanun: state law in contrast to religious law.

qarargah: military base (in Panjshir).

qawm: solidarity group, whose sociological basis varies. It may be a clan (in tribal areas), a village, an ethnic group, an extended family, a professional group.

qazi: religious judge applying the sharia.

qesas: law of retaliation provided by the sharia to regulate private revenge. The one offended may demand financial compensation rather than strict application of the talisman.

qesher (in contrast to masher): younger clan in Pashto tribes, in opposition to elder clans, which are more prestigious and generally richer in men and property.

qyas: reasoning by analogy, which makes it possible to judge in cases not provided for in the fiqh based on an analogous case already handled.

rish-e safed (aqsaqal in Turkish): "white beards," the elders of the village, who make up the council with real power (except in the case of the presence of a village khan). They name the malek.

riwaj: local custom, common law (as opposed to sharia and qanun).

roshanfekr: neologism to express "intellectual" (see Arabic: minwar ul fekr); literally, enlightened thought.

roshani: heterodox sect founded in the 16th century by Bayazid Ansari and who roused the eastern Pashto against the Mogul state.

ruhani: in Iranian Persian and among the Shiites, designating a member of the clergy; in the tribes, a Sufi pir who is not an alim (maraboutic Sufiism).

salafiyya: Islam reform movement in the 19th century, with Jamaluddin Afghani and Mohammed Abduh, partisans of a return to the doctrine of the ancients in order better to face the challenge of the West.

SAMA: Sazman-e Azadibakhsh-e Mardom-e Afghanistan (Afghan People's Liberation Organization), a leftist movement emerging from the Maoist movement and created in 1980 to oppose the Soviets (the founder is Abdul Majid Kalakani).

sangar: entrenchment, with the same metaphorical meaning as trench or barricade in French.

Sardar: supreme leader of a great Baluchi tribe (in Persian, army chief).

sayyad: personage supposed to have descended from the Prophet (by his daughter Fatima).

seisele: initiatic chain of transmission of the authority of the pir in a Sufi order; genealogy.

Setam-e Melli: "national oppression," a leftist organization founded by Taher Badakhshi in 1979 to oppose the Soviets as well as the Khalq; mainly Pashto.

shahid: martyr, one who fell in combat.

sharia: all Muslim religious law.

shaykh: old man, sometimes designating a pir, but mainly used among Afghan Shiites to describe the ulema who studied in Iran or Iraq.

shaykh ul-islam: qazi whose authority extends over a region or country and who has the authority to promulgate fatwa.

Shikhism: religion of India founded in the 15th century and which recruits from among the Panjabi ethnic group; long adversaries of the Muslims.

shura: council, advisory assembly.

Sohrawardiyya: Sufi brotherhood founded in the 12th century by Abdul Qahir Sohrawardi.

Sufiism: mystical doctrine of Islam.

sunnat: tradition, more precisely, tradition of the Prophet; tales of his deeds and feats, as well as sayings (hadith).

syasat: politics.

tafsir: commentary on the Koran.

Tajiks: designates, rather than an ethnic group, the Persian-speaking Sunnites of Afghanistan.

takfir: action of declaring a Muslim to be an infidel.

taleb (plural, toleba): student of religious sciences in a madrasa.

ta'mir: building, government post.

taqlid: imitation; among the Shiites, imitation of a director of conscience chosen by the religious individual.

tariqat: path; Sufi brotherhood.

ta'zir: discretionary penalties provided for by the law of the prince, in cases in which the offense is not covered by religious law.

tehrlik: movement (political sense).

Turkmen: Turkish-speaking ethnic group of northern Afghanistan.

ulema: see alim.

ulus: tribal confederation.

uluswali: district of Afghanistan (there are nearly 350).

umma: the Islamic community, all Muslims in the world.

ushr: tithe, Islamic tax on income which goes to the state.

Uzbeks: Turkish-speaking ethnic group in northern Afghanistan and southern USSR.

wahdat al wujud: unity of being, in contrast to wahdat al shuhud, unity of phenomena. The first theory identifies the creature with God; the second, which characterizes orthodox Sufiism, maintains an ontological difference between the two.



Wahhabism: very strict puritanical sect founded in Saudi Arabia in the 18th century, dominant in that country. By extension and improper use, designates the fundamentalists of the Indian subcontinent.

wali: governor.

waqf: inalienable right whose enjoyment is devoted to a religious institution.

wesh: periodic redistribution of individual land between two or three Pashto clans.

zahr: what is apparent, what is exoteric, the external message of the revelation.

zakat: legal alms, Islamic tax on capital, reserved for precise beneficiaries (the poor, the clergy, and so on).

zehr: litany of the names of God characterizing one of the ecstatic rites of the Sufi orders.

zyarat: tomb of a saint that has become a place of pilgrimage.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL EVENTS

1747: victory of the Durrani tribal confederation led by Ahmad Shah of the Saddozay clan of the Popalzay tribe. Founded a Durrani empire that extended as far as Hindustan.

1761: victory of Panipat against the Marathis.

1773-1793: reign of Timur Shah.

1793-1799: Zaman Shah.

1803-1809: Shah Shojah.

1809-1818: reign of Mahmud.

1818-1835: civil war.

1835-1863: reign of Dost Mohammad.

1839-1842: first Anglo-Afghan war, Shah Shojah interlude.

1856: The Persians take Herat.

1863-1879: reign of Shir Ali.

1878: second Anglo-Afghan war.

1879: Gandamak Treaty signed by Yakub Khan, authorizing the presence of a British representative in Kabul.

1880: The British recognize Abdurrahman as amir.

1880: British defeat at Maywand.

1885: occupation of the Panjdeh oasis by the Russians.

1887: Russian-Afghan accord on the northern border of Afghanistan.

1893: Durand accord on the eastern border of Afghanistan.

1901: death of Abdurrahman; his son Habibullah becomes amir.

1911: founding of modernist newspaper SERAJ UL-AKHBAR by Mahmud Tarzi.

1919: assassination of Habibullah; Amanullah becomes amir.

1919: third Anglo-Afghan war.

1921: The amir of Bukhara flees to Afghanistan.

1921: 21 February, friendship treaty with the USSR.

1924: tribal uprising in Khost.

1927: visit of the king to Europe.

1928: series of reforms followed by the uprising of the Shinwari and Bacha-ye Saqao.

1929: abdication of Amanullah, defeat of Bacha and victory of Nader Khan, supported by a tribal confederation.

1933: assassination of Nader Khan; Zaher becomes king.

1946: founding of the University of Kabul.

1947: partition of India and the independence of Pakistan; beginning of the Afghan claim to Pashtonistan.

1953-1963: Daoud, cousin of the king, becomes prime minister.

1955: in December, official visit of Khrushchev and Bulganin.

1961: crisis with Pakistan.

1963: resignation of Daoud, beginning of constitutional era.

1963-1965: Youssouf ministry.

1965: general elections (August), student riots and resignation of Youssouf Cabinet (October).

1965: founding of the Afghan People's Democratic Party (Communist Party)

1969: elections for second term of Parliament.

1973: 17 July, coup d'etat of Prince Daoud, who instituted the republic.

1978: 27 April, communist coup d'etat.

1979: 27 December, Soviet invasion.

## Parties of the Resistance

### Sunnite Parties

#### 1. Islamist

Hezb-i Islami: radical Islamist party led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, which recruits from among the educated students of the nonreligious government school system and some ulema from the Kabul region. Pashto.

Hezb-i Islami (Khales): moderate Islamist party led by Mawlawi Yunus Khales, which recruits from among the students of the government school system and the ulema of the Khugiani and Jadran tribes, as well as in the region of Kabul and Kandahar. Mainly Pashto.

Jamiat-i Islami: moderate islamist party, led by Borhanuddin Rabbani, which recruits from among the students of the government school system (religious and nonreligious), the ulema of the north and the Naqshbandi systems of the north. Mainly Tajik.

#### 2. Traditionalist

Harakat-i Enqelab-i Islami: moderate clerical party, led by Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi, which recruits from among the ulema trained in the private madreasa. Mainly Pashto.

Jebhe-yi Nejad-i Melli (National Liberation Front): secular, led by Sebghatullah Mojaddidi, which recruits from among tribal leaders, the establishment of the old regime and the Naqshbandi of the south.

Mahaz-i Islami (Islamic Front): royalist, led by Pir Sayyad Ahmad Gaylani, recruits from among the establishment of the old regime, the tribal leaders and the qaderi of the south. Mainly Pashto.

## Shiite Parties

Shura-ye Ettefagh-i Islami: traditionalist, led by Sayyad Beheshti, recruits from among the Hazara peasantry, led by the sayyad.

Nasr: radical Islamist party, led by a council, recruits from among young Hazara trained in Iran.

Harakat-i Islami: moderate Islamist party, led by Shaykh Assef Mohseni, recruits from among the educated Shiites of all ethnic groups.

Pasdaran: "Guardians of the Revolution," radical Islamist, directly under the control of Iran, led by Akbari de Turkman and Saddiqi de Nili.

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